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THE NEW MUTANTS®
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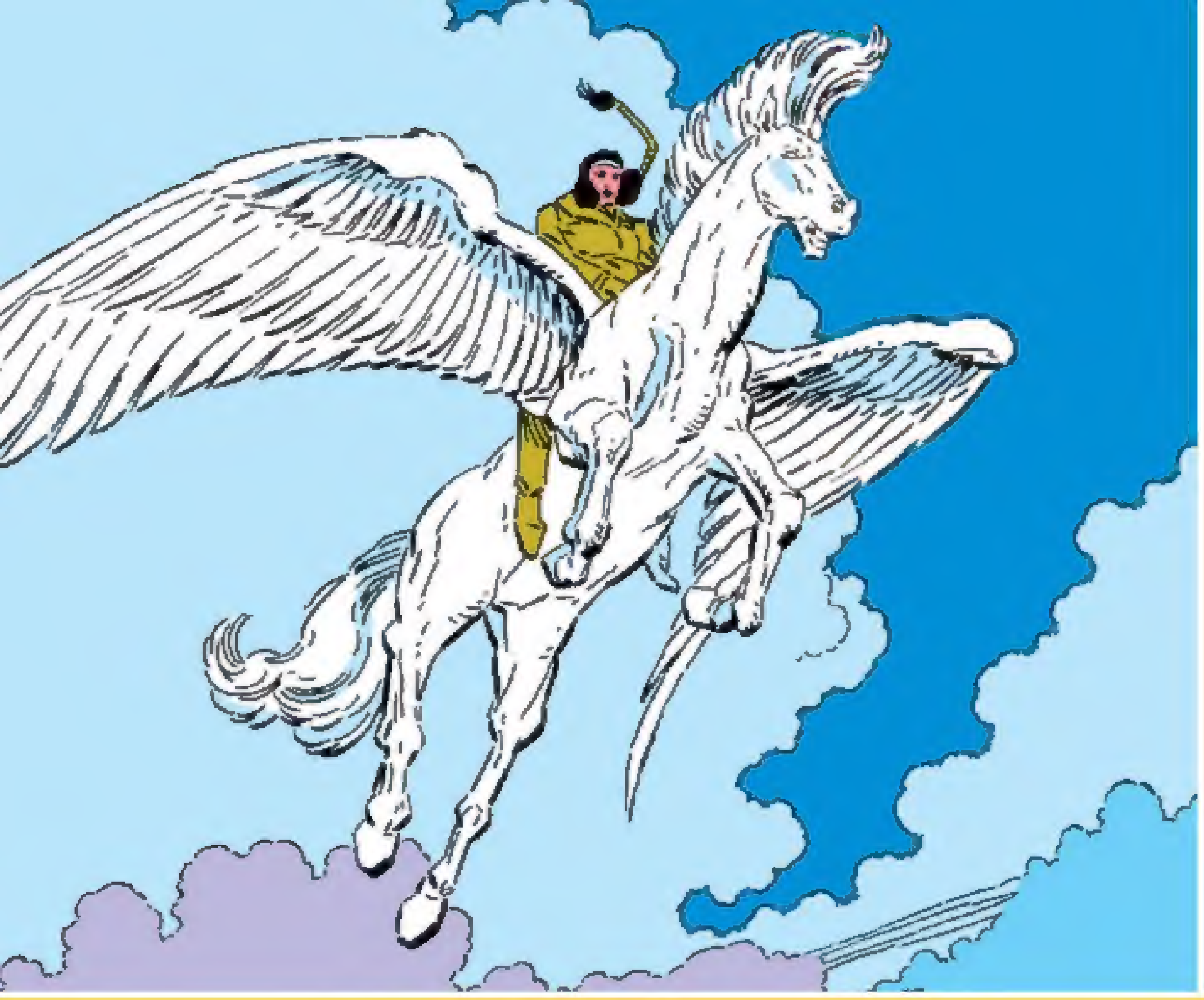

# THE NEW MUTANTS

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# THE NEW MUTANTS

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JULY
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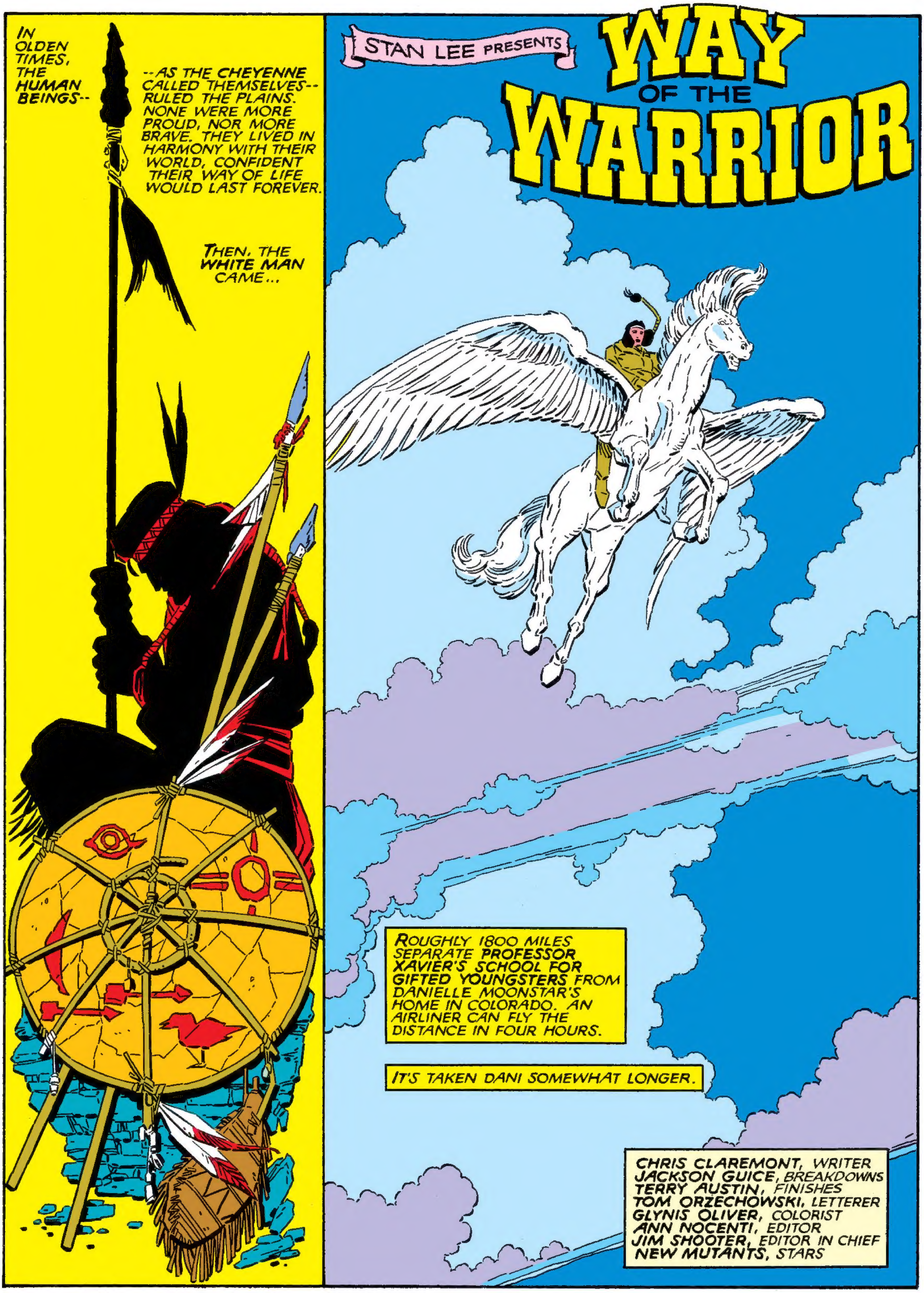
THE • NEW
MUTANTS™
MIRAGE
VS
DEATH
SHOWDOWN!


IN OLDEN TIMES, THE HUMAN BEINGS--
--AS THE CHEYENNE CALLED THEMSELVES-- RULED THE PLAINS. NONE WERE MORE PROUD, NOR MORE BRAVE. THEY LIVED IN HARMONY WITH THEIR WORLD, CONFIDENT THEIR WAY OF LIFE WOULD LAST FOREVER.
THEN, THE WHITE MAN CAME...
STAN LEE PRESENTS
WAY OF THE WARRIOR
ROUGHLY 1800 MILES SEPARATE PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS FROM DANIELLE MOONSTAR'S HOME IN COLORADO. AN AIRLINER CAN FLY THE DISTANCE IN FOUR HOURS.
IT'S TAKEN DANI SOMEWHAT LONGER.
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER
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GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF
NEW MUTANTS, STARS

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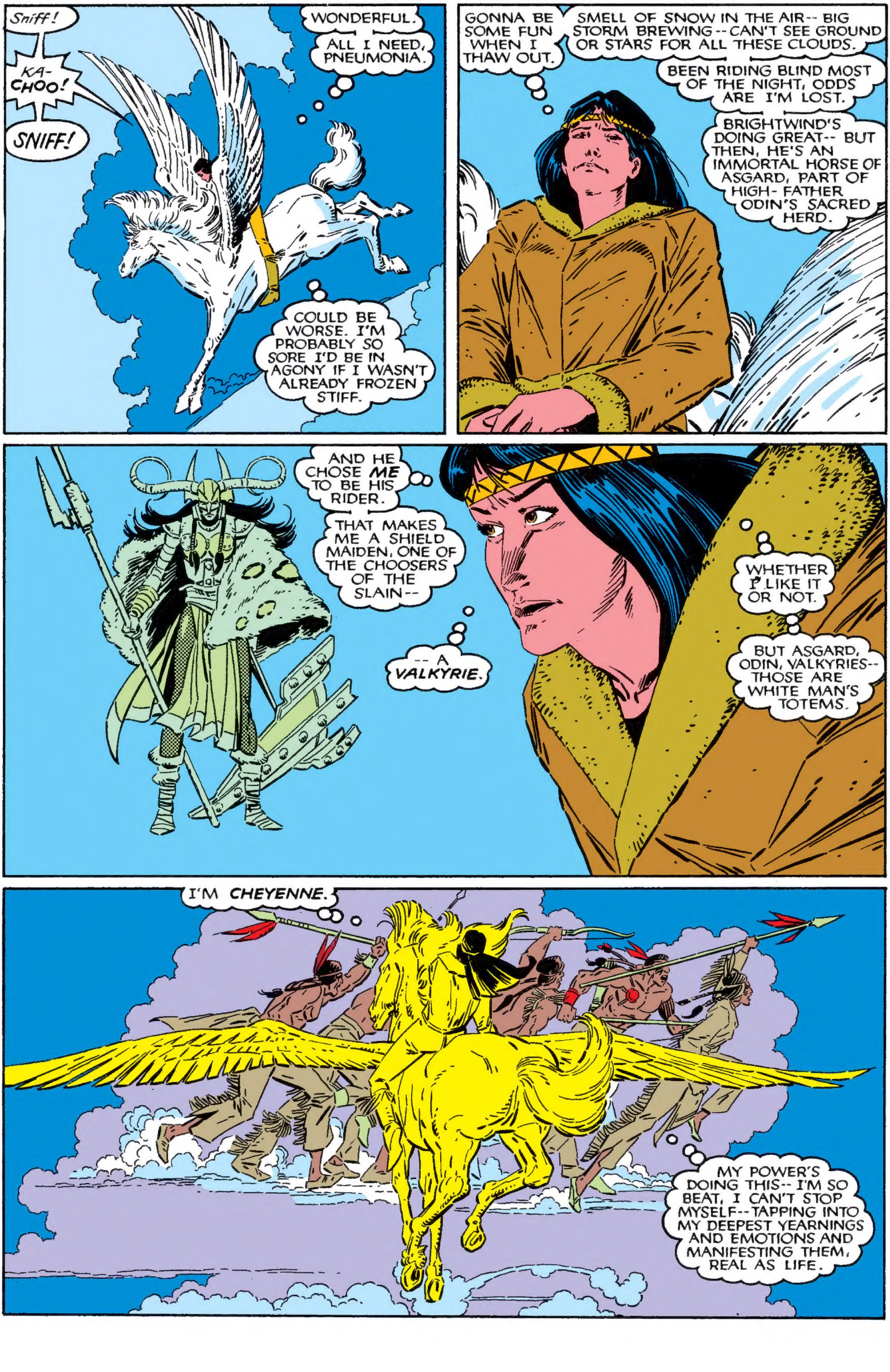
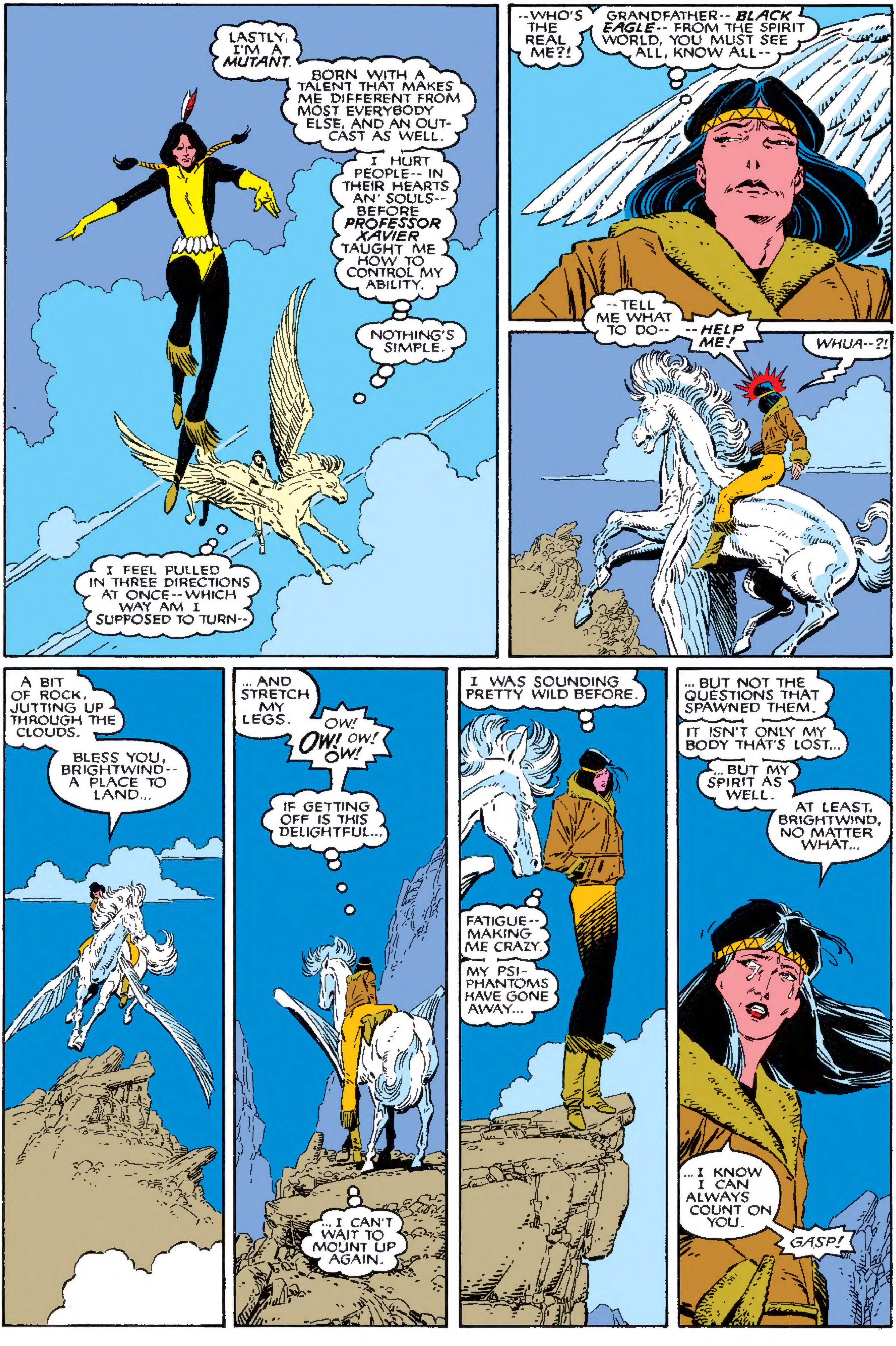
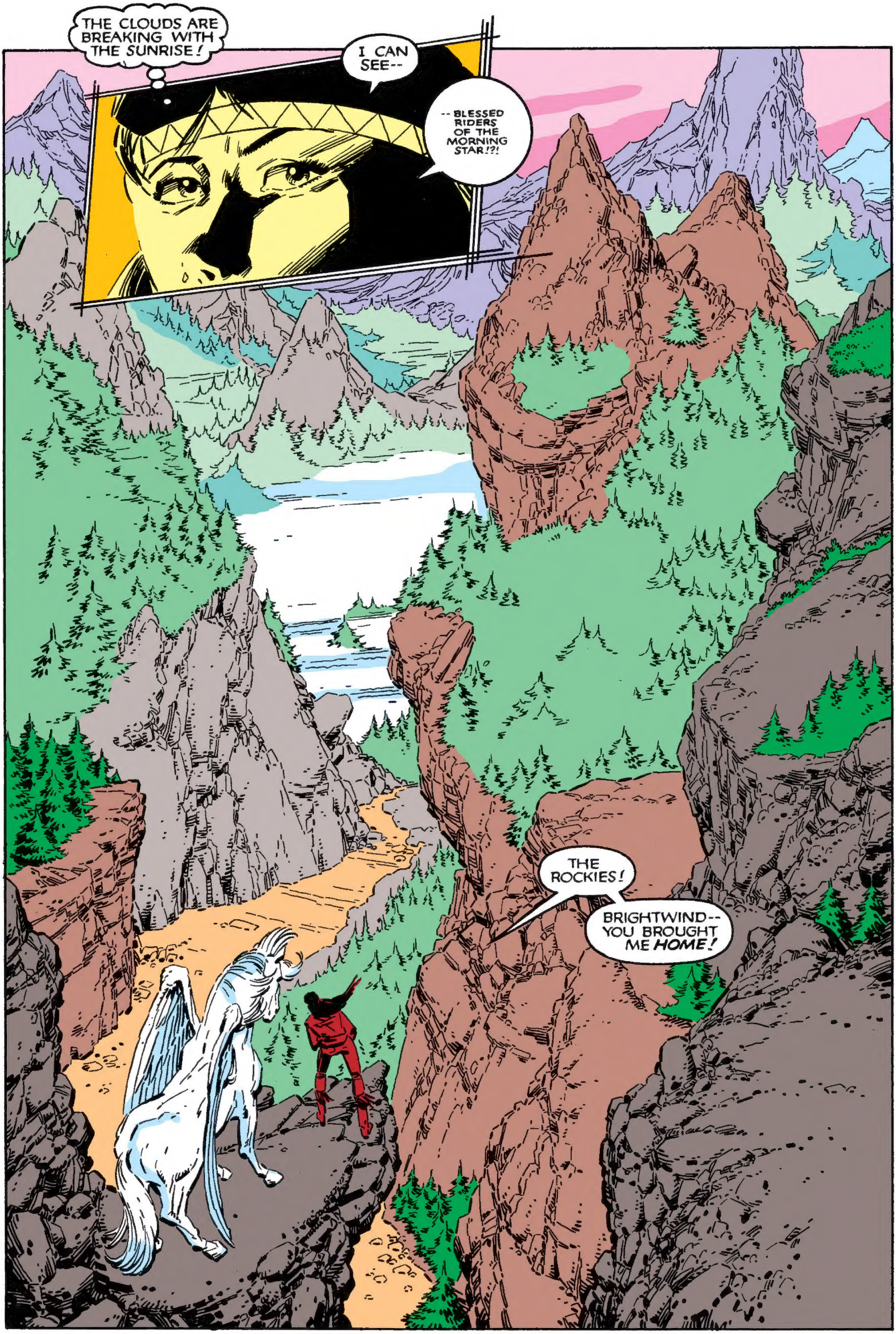
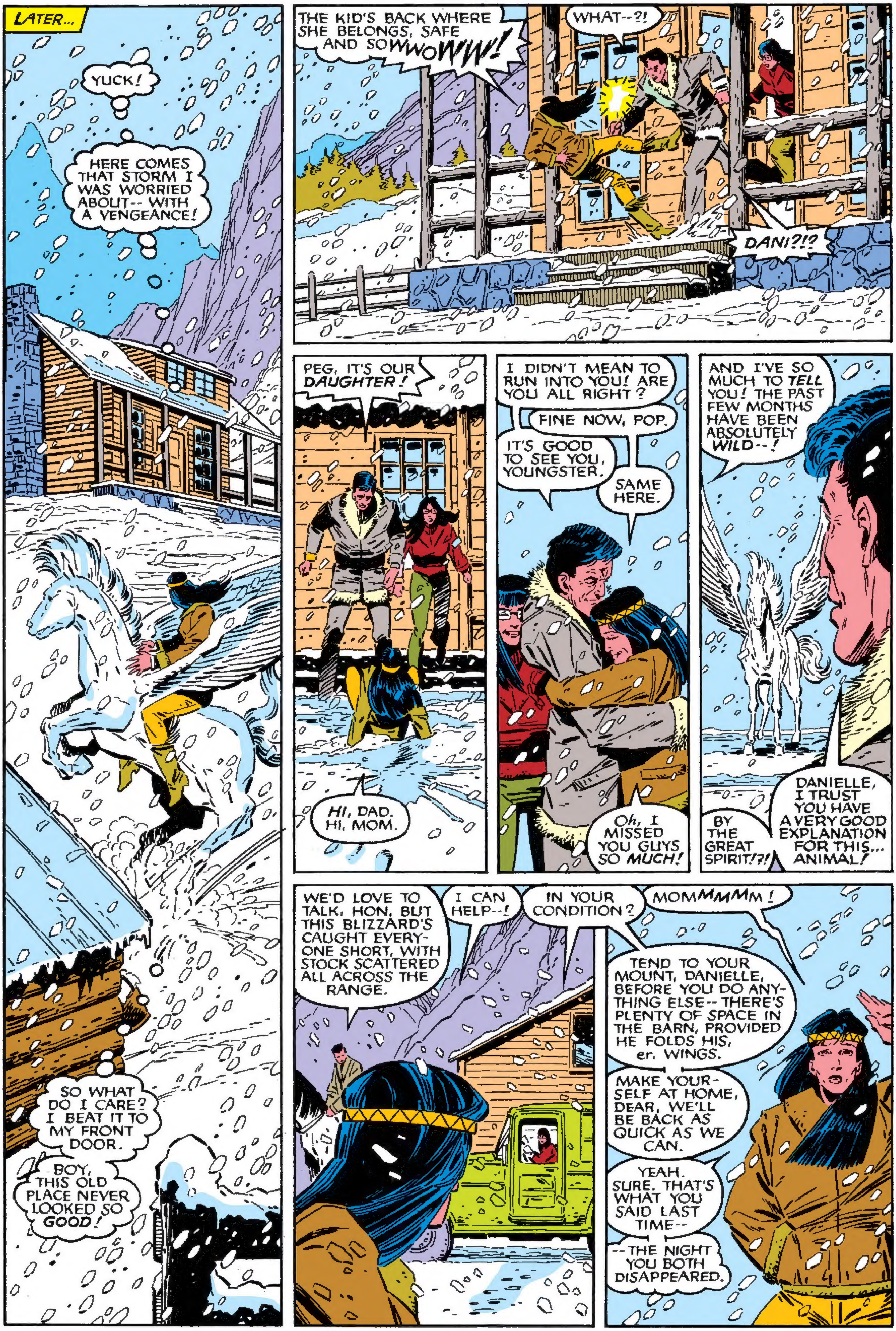
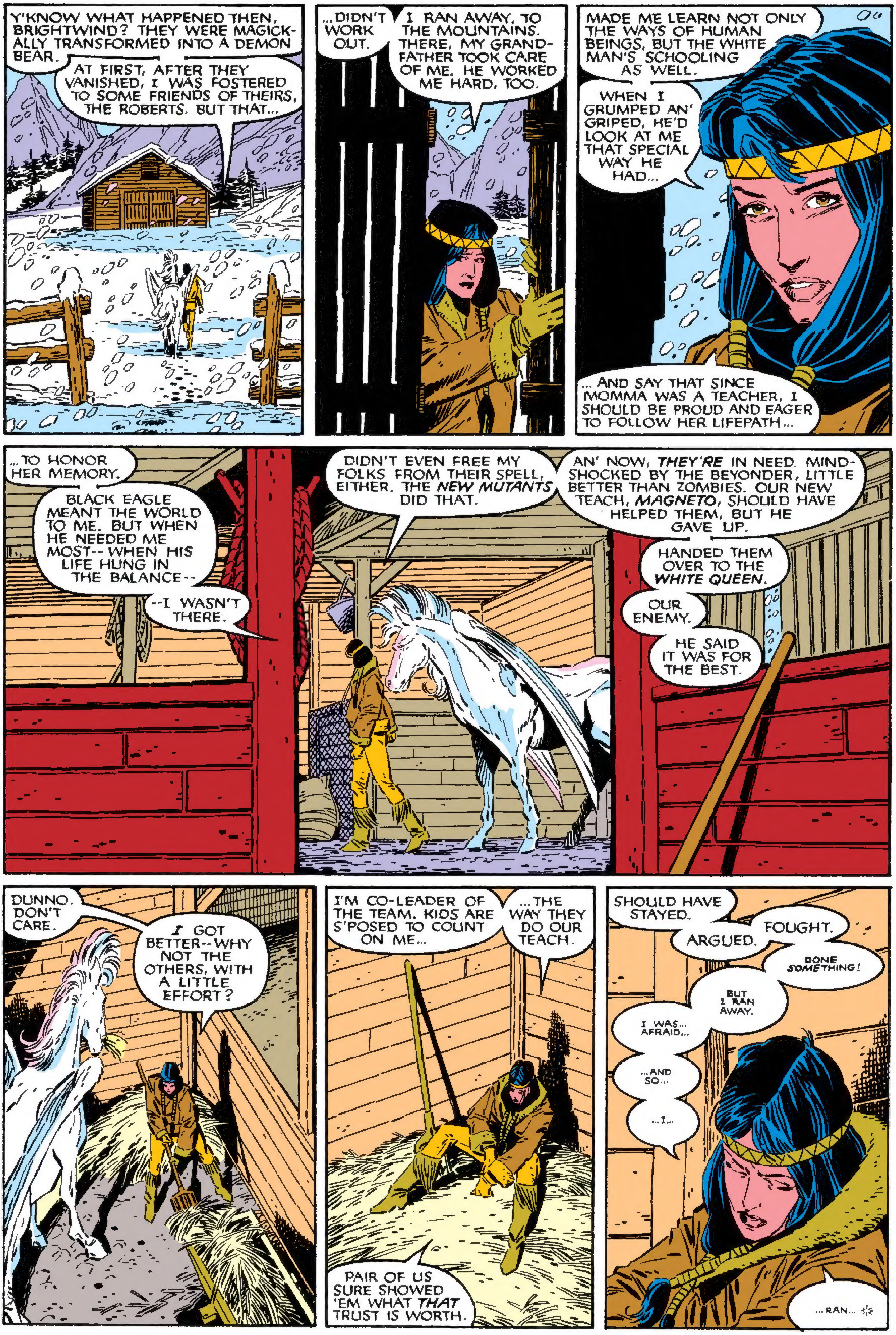
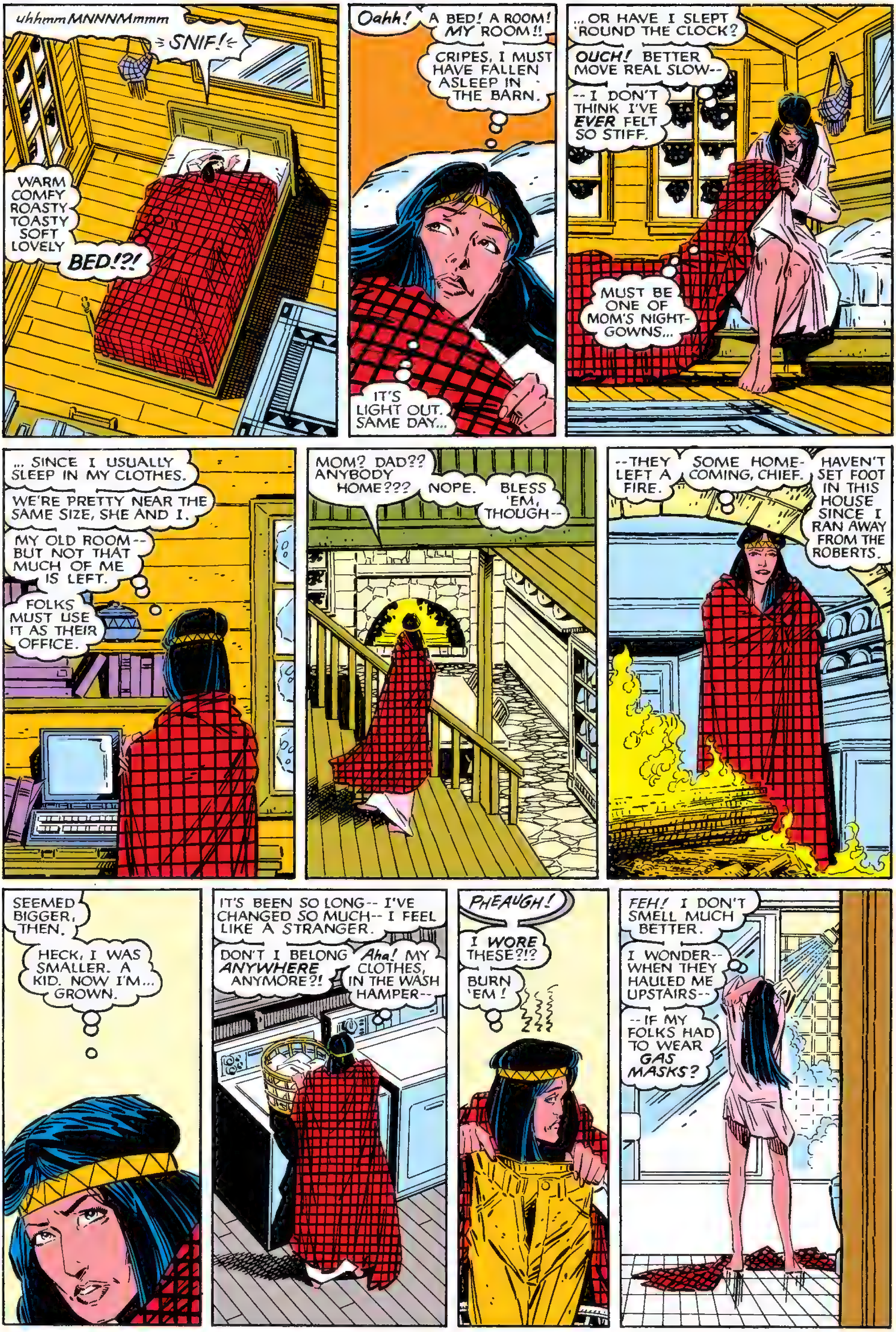

Sniff!
KA-CHOO!
SNIFF!
WONDERFUL.
ALL I NEED, PNEUMONIA.
COULD BE WORSE. I'M PROBABLY SO SORE I'D BE IN AGONY IF I WASN'T ALREADY FROZEN STIFF.
GONNA BE SOME FUN WHEN I THAW OUT.
SMELL OF SNOW IN THE AIR-- BIG STORM BREWING-- CAN'T SEE GROUND OR STARS FOR ALL THESE CLOUDS.
BEEN RIDING BLIND MOST OF THE NIGHT, ODDS ARE I'M LOST.
BRIGHTWIND'S DOING GREAT-- BUT THEN, HE'S AN IMMORTAL HORSE OF ASGARD, PART OF HIGH-FATHER ODIN'S SACRED HERD.
AND HE CHOSE *ME* TO BE HIS RIDER.
THAT MAKES ME A SHIELD MAIDEN, ONE OF THE CHOOSERS OF THE SLAIN--
-- A *VALKYRIE*.
WHETHER *I* LIKE IT OR NOT.
BUT ASGARD, ODIN, VALKYRIES-- THOSE ARE WHITE MAN'S TOTEMS.
I'M *CHEYENNE*.
MY POWER'S DOING THIS-- I'M SO BEAT, I CAN'T STOP MYSELF-- TAPPING INTO MY DEEPEST YEARNINGS AND EMOTIONS AND MANIFESTING THEM, REAL AS LIFE.

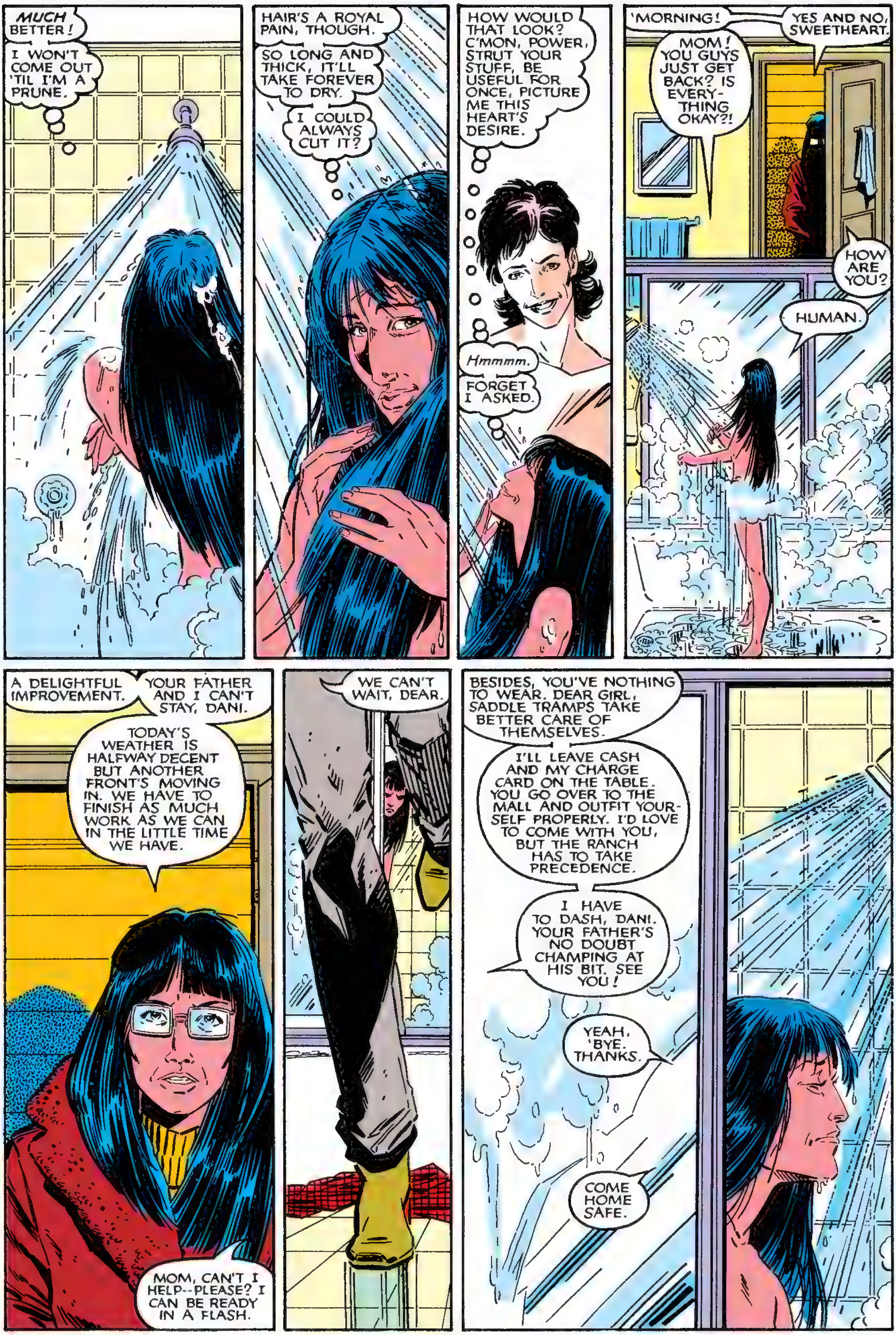

LASTLY, I'M A *MUTANT*.
BORN WITH A TALENT THAT MAKES ME DIFFERENT FROM MOST EVERYBODY ELSE, AND AN OUTCAST AS WELL.
I HURT PEOPLE-- IN THEIR HEARTS AN' SOULS-- BEFORE ***PROFESSOR XAVIER*** TAUGHT ME HOW TO CONTROL MY ABILITY.
NOTHING'S SIMPLE.
I FEEL PULLED IN THREE DIRECTIONS AT ONCE--WHICH WAY AM I SUPPOSED TO TURN--
--WHO'S THE REAL ME?!
GRANDFATHER-- ***BLACK EAGLE***-- FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD, YOU MUST SEE ALL, KNOW ALL--
--TELL ME WHAT TO DO--
***--HELP ME!***
*WHUA--?!*
A BIT OF ROCK, JUTTING UP THROUGH THE CLOUDS.
BLESS YOU, BRIGHTWIND-- A PLACE TO LAND...
...AND STRETCH MY LEGS.
*OW! **OW!** OW! OW!*
IF GETTING OFF IS THIS DELIGHTFUL...
...I CAN'T WAIT TO MOUNT UP AGAIN.
I WAS SOUNDING PRETTY WILD BEFORE.
FATIGUE-- MAKING ME CRAZY.
MY PSI-PHANTOMS HAVE GONE AWAY...
...BUT NOT THE QUESTIONS THAT SPAWNED THEM.
IT ISN'T ONLY MY BODY THAT'S LOST...
...BUT MY SPIRIT AS WELL.
AT LEAST, BRIGHTWIND, NO MATTER WHAT...
...I KNOW I CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON YOU.
*GASP!*

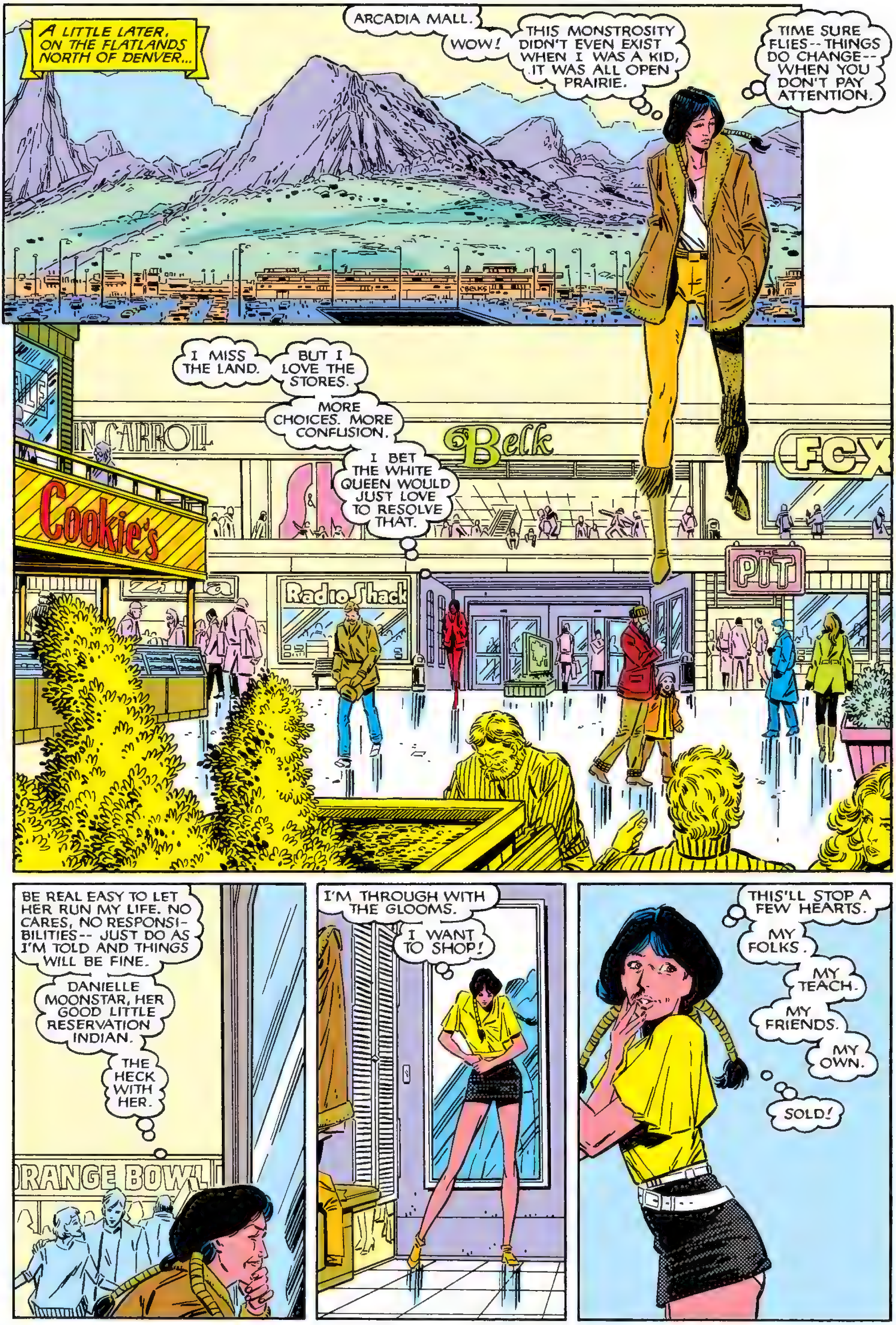

THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING WITH THE SUNRISE!
I CAN SEE--
--BLESSED RIDERS OF THE MORNING STAR!?!
THE ROCKIES!
BRIGHTWIND--YOU BROUGHT ME HOME!

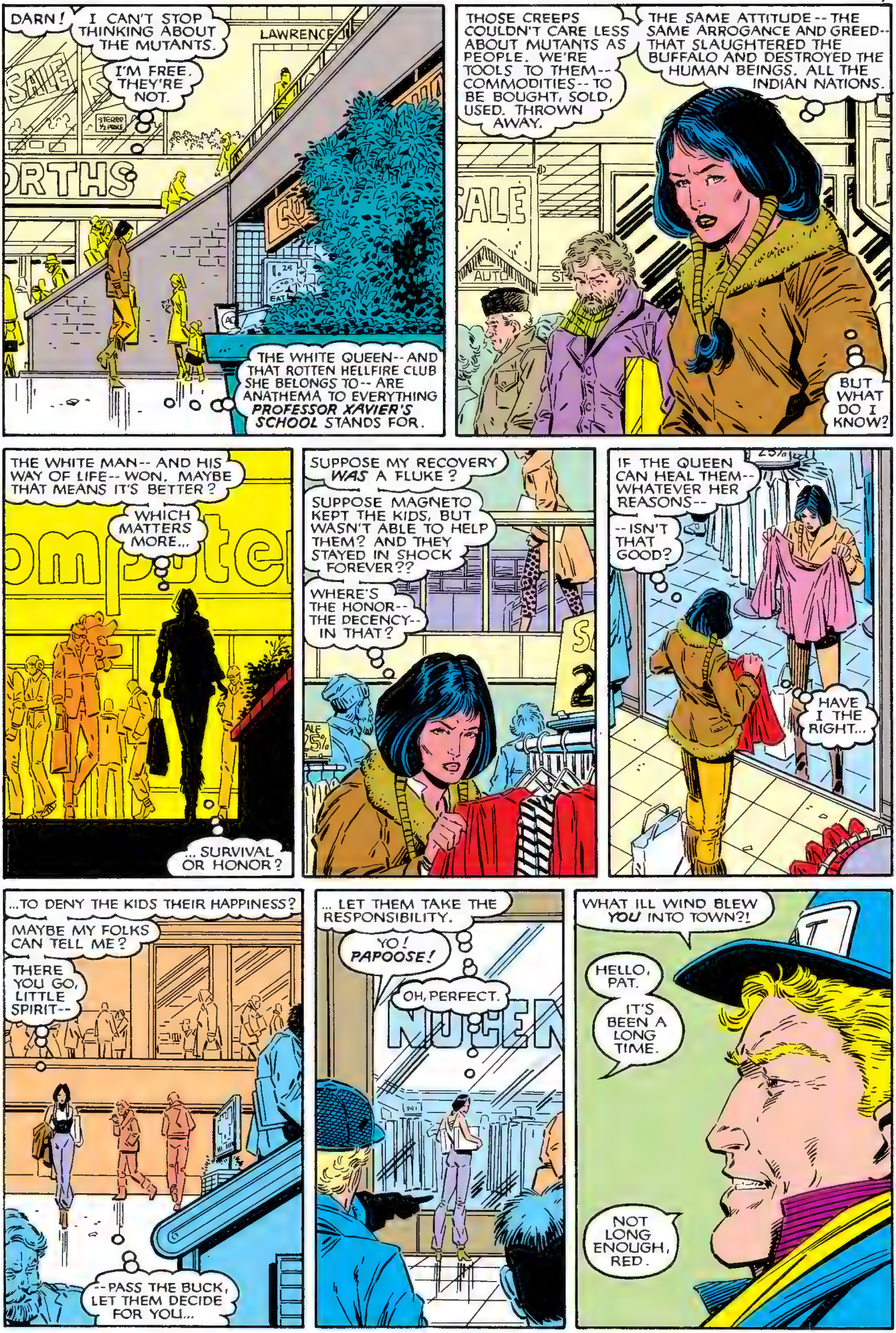

LATER...
YUCK!
HERE COMES THAT STORM I WAS WORRIED ABOUT-- WITH A VENGEANCE!
SO WHAT DO I CARE? I BEAT IT TO MY FRONT DOOR.
BOY, THIS OLD PLACE NEVER LOOKED SO *GOOD*!
THE KID'S BACK WHERE SHE BELONGS, SAFE AND SO WWWOWW!
WHAT--?!
*DANI?!?*
PEG, IT'S OUR *DAUGHTER*!
*HI*, DAD. HI, MOM.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO RUN INTO YOU! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE NOW, POP.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, YOUNGSTER.
SAME HERE.
*Oh*, I MISSED YOU GUYS SO *MUCH*!
AND I'VE SO MUCH TO *TELL* YOU! THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY *WILD*--!
BY THE GREAT SPIRIT!?!
DANIELLE, I TRUST YOU HAVE A VERY GOOD EXPLANATION FOR THIS... ANIMAL!
WE'D LOVE TO TALK, HON, BUT THIS BLIZZARD'S CAUGHT EVERYONE SHORT, WITH STOCK SCATTERED ALL ACROSS THE RANGE.
I CAN HELP--!
IN YOUR CONDITION?
MOMMMMM!
TEND TO YOUR MOUNT, DANIELLE, BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE-- THERE'S PLENTY OF SPACE IN THE BARN, PROVIDED HE FOLDS HIS, er, WINGS.
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME, DEAR, WE'LL BE BACK AS QUICK AS WE CAN.
YEAH. SURE. THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID LAST TIME--
--THE NIGHT YOU BOTH DISAPPEARED.

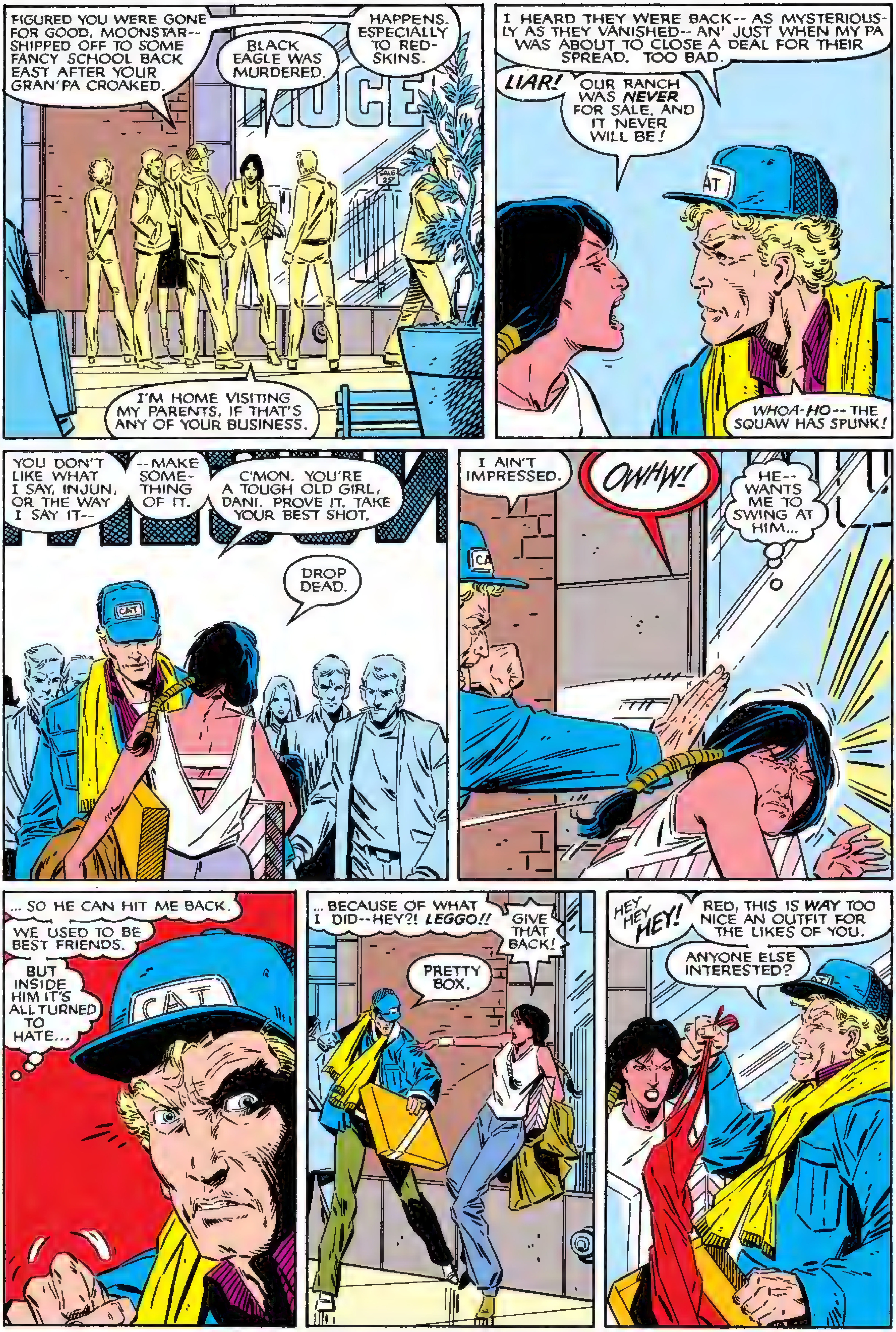

Y'KNOW WHAT HAPPENED THEN, BRIGHTWIND? THEY WERE MAGICKALLY TRANSFORMED INTO A DEMON BEAR.
AT FIRST, AFTER THEY VANISHED, I WAS FOSTERED TO SOME FRIENDS OF THEIRS, THE ROBERTS. BUT THAT...
...DIDN'T WORK OUT.
I RAN AWAY, TO THE MOUNTAINS. THERE, MY GRANDFATHER TOOK CARE OF ME. HE WORKED ME HARD, TOO.
MADE ME LEARN NOT ONLY THE WAYS OF HUMAN BEINGS, BUT THE WHITE MAN'S SCHOOLING AS WELL.
WHEN I GRUMPED AN' GRIPED, HE'D LOOK AT ME THAT SPECIAL WAY HE HAD...
... AND SAY THAT SINCE MOMMA WAS A TEACHER, I SHOULD BE PROUD AND EAGER TO FOLLOW HER LIFEPATH...
...TO HONOR HER MEMORY.
BLACK EAGLE MEANT THE WORLD TO ME. BUT WHEN HE NEEDED ME MOST--WHEN HIS LIFE HUNG IN THE BALANCE--
--I WASN'T THERE.
DIDN'T EVEN FREE MY FOLKS FROM THEIR SPELL, EITHER. THE *NEW MUTANTS* DID THAT.
AN' NOW, *THEY'RE* IN NEED. MIND-SHOCKED BY THE BEYONDER, LITTLE BETTER THAN ZOMBIES. OUR NEW TEACH, *MAGNETO*, SHOULD HAVE HELPED THEM, BUT HE GAVE UP.
HANDED THEM OVER TO THE *WHITE QUEEN*.
OUR ENEMY.
HE SAID IT WAS FOR THE BEST.
DUNNO. DON'T CARE.
*I* GOT BETTER--WHY NOT THE OTHERS, WITH A LITTLE EFFORT?
I'M CO-LEADER OF THE TEAM. KIDS ARE S'POSED TO COUNT ON ME...
...THE WAY THEY DO OUR TEACH.
PAIR OF US SURE SHOWED 'EM WHAT *THAT* TRUST IS WORTH.
SHOULD HAVE STAYED.
ARGUED.
FOUGHT.
DONE *SOME*THING!
BUT I RAN AWAY.
I WAS... AFRAID...
...AND SO...
...I...
...RAN...

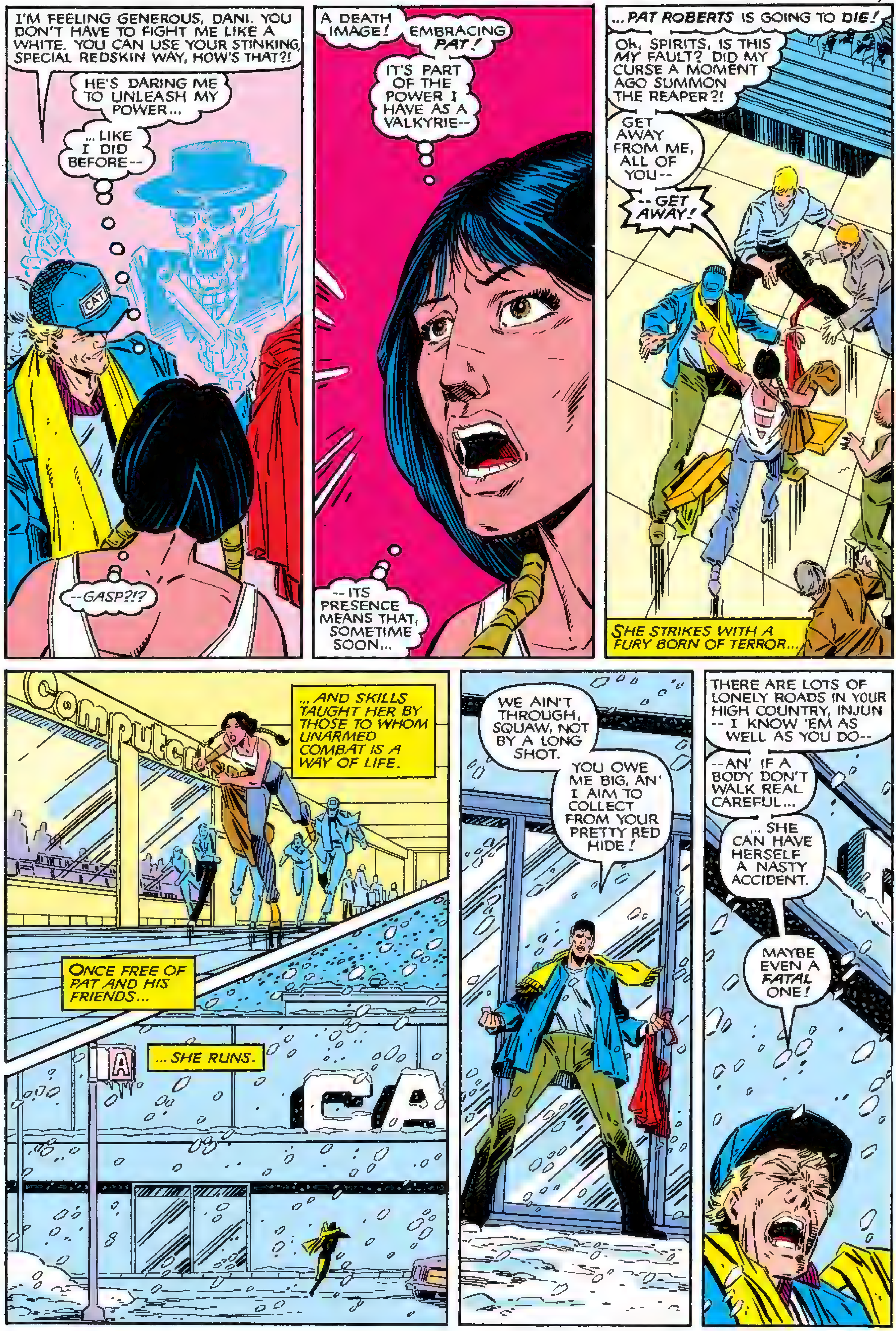

uhhmm MNNNMmmm
SNIF!
WARM COMFY ROASTY TOASTY SOFT LOVELY BED!?!
Oahh!
A BED! A ROOM! MY ROOM!!
CRIPES, I MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN THE BARN.
IT'S LIGHT OUT. SAME DAY...
... OR HAVE I SLEPT 'ROUND THE CLOCK?
OUCH! BETTER MOVE REAL SLOW--
-- I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER FELT SO STIFF.
MUST BE ONE OF MOM'S NIGHT-GOWNS...
... SINCE I USUALLY SLEEP IN MY CLOTHES.
WE'RE PRETTY NEAR THE SAME SIZE, SHE AND I.
MY OLD ROOM-- BUT NOT THAT MUCH OF ME IS LEFT.
FOLKS MUST USE IT AS THEIR OFFICE.
MOM? DAD?? ANYBODY HOME???
NOPE.
BLESS 'EM, THOUGH--
--THEY LEFT A FIRE.
SOME HOME-COMING, CHIEF.
HAVEN'T SET FOOT IN THIS HOUSE SINCE I RAN AWAY FROM THE ROBERTS.
SEEMED BIGGER, THEN.
HECK, I WAS SMALLER. A KID. NOW I'M... GROWN.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG-- I'VE CHANGED SO MUCH-- I FEEL LIKE A STRANGER.
DON'T I BELONG ANYWHERE ANYMORE?!
Aha! MY CLOTHES, IN THE WASH HAMPER--
PHEAUGH!
I WORE THESE?!?
BURN 'EM!
FEH! I DON'T SMELL MUCH BETTER.
I WONDER-- WHEN THEY HAULED ME UPSTAIRS--
--IF MY FOLKS HAD TO WEAR GAS MASKS?

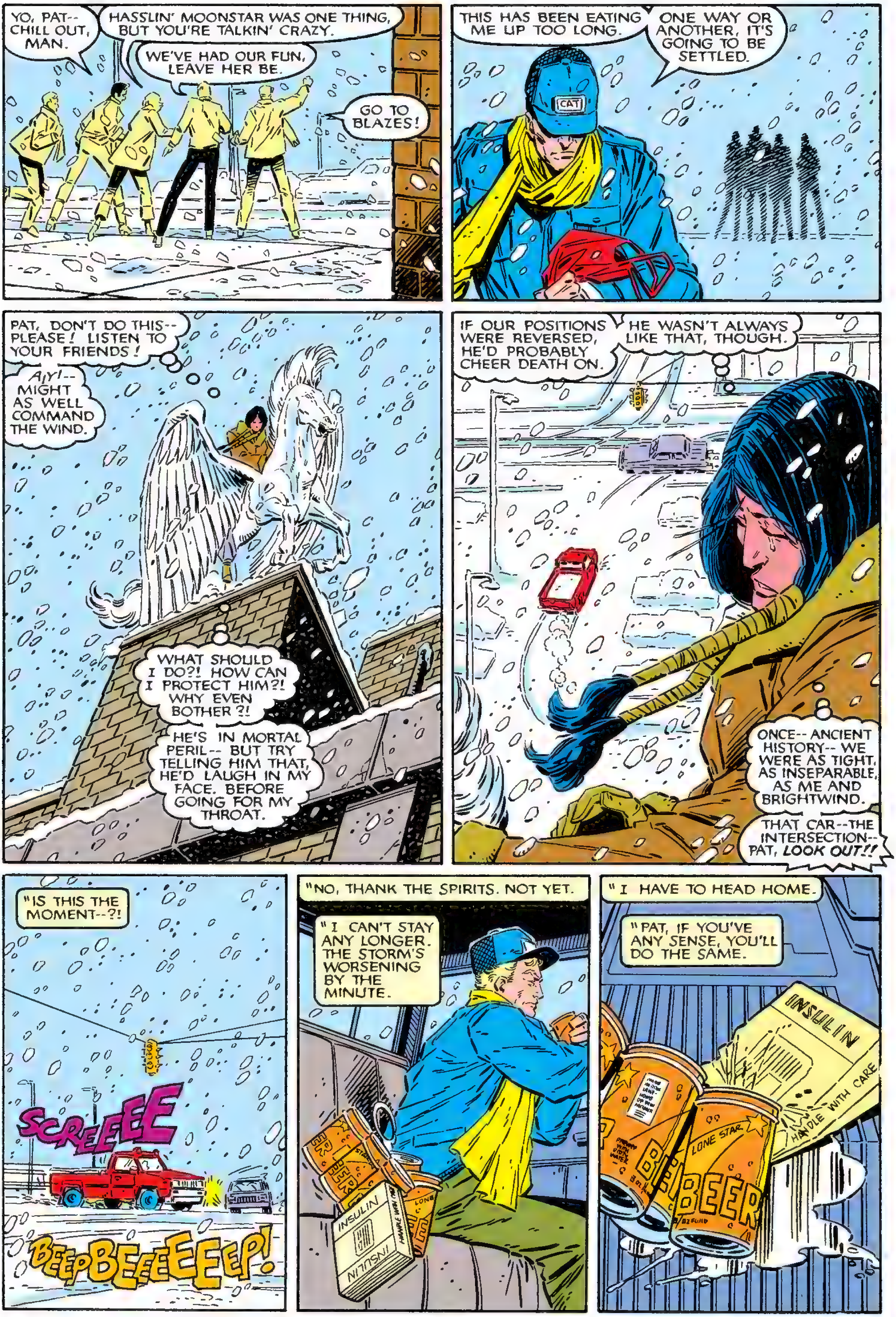

*MUCH* BETTER!
I WON'T COME OUT 'TIL I'M A PRUNE.
HAIR'S A ROYAL PAIN, THOUGH.
SO LONG AND THICK, IT'LL TAKE FOREVER TO DRY.
I COULD ALWAYS CUT IT?
HOW WOULD THAT LOOK? C'MON, POWER, STRUT YOUR STUFF, BE USEFUL FOR ONCE, PICTURE ME THIS HEART'S DESIRE.
*Hmmmm.*
FORGET I ASKED.
'MORNING!
YES AND NO, SWEETHEART.
MOM! YOU GUYS JUST GET BACK? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?!
HOW ARE YOU?
HUMAN.
A DELIGHTFUL IMPROVEMENT.
YOUR FATHER AND I CAN'T STAY, DANI.
TODAY'S WEATHER IS HALFWAY DECENT BUT ANOTHER FRONT'S MOVING IN. WE HAVE TO FINISH AS MUCH WORK AS WE CAN IN THE LITTLE TIME WE HAVE.
MOM, CAN'T I HELP--PLEASE? I CAN BE READY IN A FLASH.
WE CAN'T WAIT, DEAR.
BESIDES, YOU'VE NOTHING TO WEAR. DEAR GIRL, SADDLE TRAMPS TAKE BETTER CARE OF THEMSELVES.
I'LL LEAVE CASH AND MY CHARGE CARD ON THE TABLE. YOU GO OVER TO THE MALL AND OUTFIT YOURSELF PROPERLY. I'D LOVE TO COME WITH YOU, BUT THE RANCH HAS TO TAKE PRECEDENCE.
I HAVE TO DASH, DANI. YOUR FATHER'S NO DOUBT CHAMPING AT HIS BIT. SEE YOU!
YEAH, 'BYE. THANKS.
COME HOME SAFE.

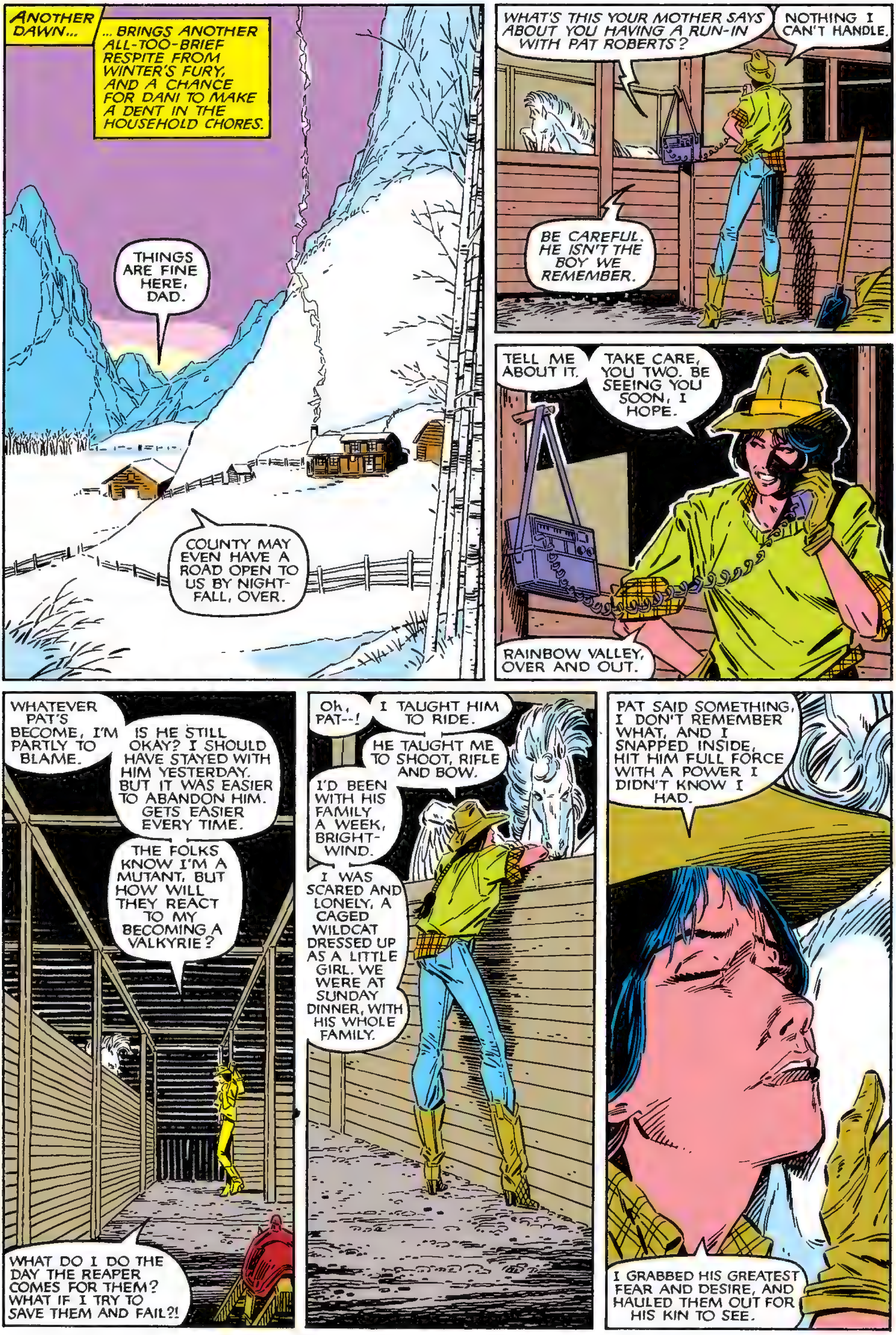

A LITTLE LATER, ON THE FLATLANDS NORTH OF DENVER...
ARCADIA MALL.
WOW!
THIS MONSTROSITY DIDN'T EVEN EXIST WHEN I WAS A KID. IT WAS ALL OPEN PRAIRIE.
TIME SURE FLIES-- THINGS DO CHANGE-- WHEN YOU DON'T PAY ATTENTION.
I MISS THE LAND.
BUT I LOVE THE STORES.
MORE CHOICES. MORE CONFUSION.
I BET THE WHITE QUEEN WOULD JUST LOVE TO RESOLVE THAT.
IN CARROLL
Belk
FCX
Cookie's
Radio Shack
THE PIT
BE REAL EASY TO LET HER RUN MY LIFE. NO CARES, NO RESPONSIBILITIES-- JUST DO AS I'M TOLD AND THINGS WILL BE FINE.
DANIELLE MOONSTAR, HER GOOD LITTLE RESERVATION INDIAN.
THE HECK WITH HER.
ORANGE BOWL
I'M THROUGH WITH THE GLOOMS.
I WANT TO SHOP!
THIS'LL STOP A FEW HEARTS.
MY FOLKS.
MY TEACH.
MY FRIENDS.
MY OWN.
SOLD!

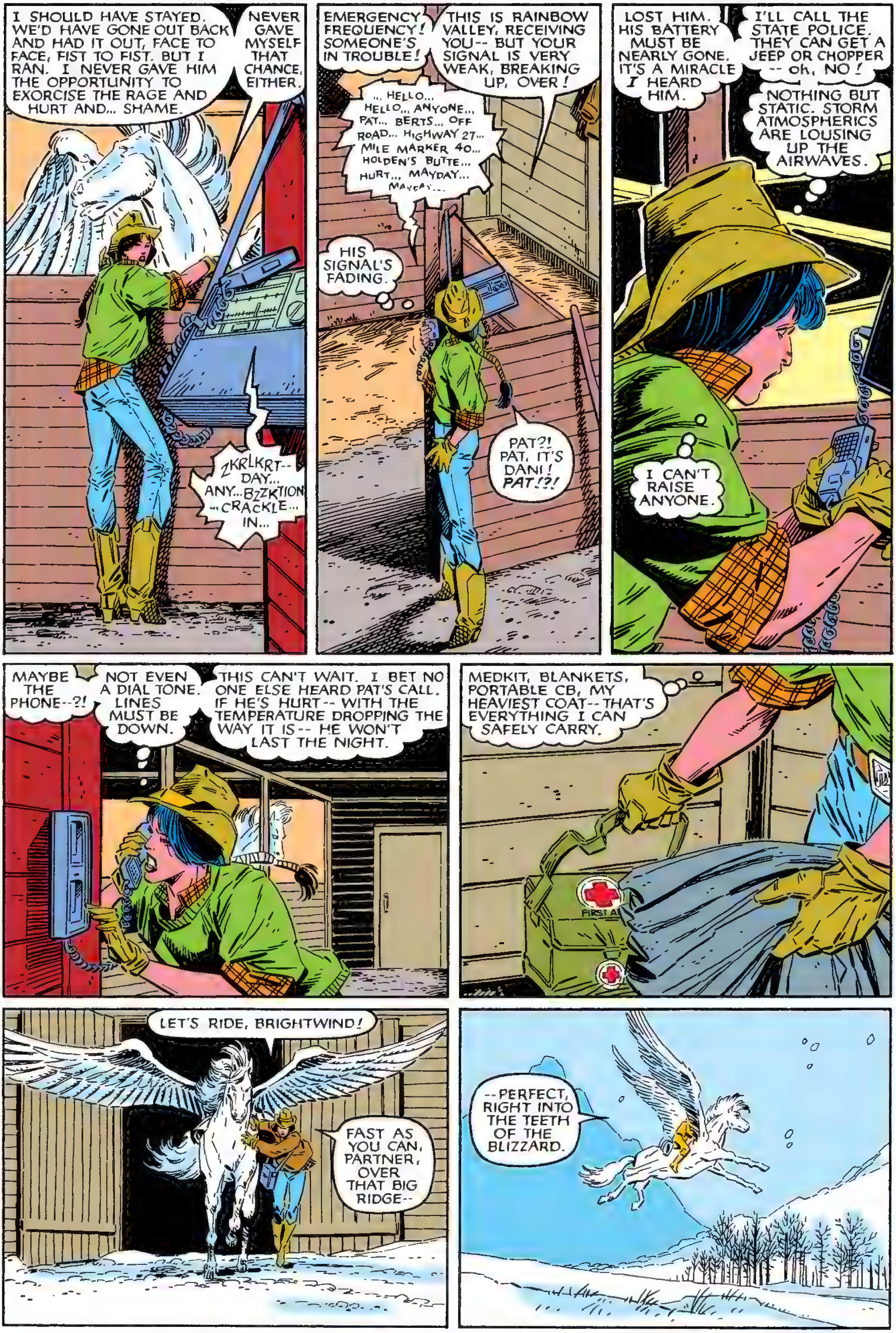

DARN!
I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THE MUTANTS.
I'M FREE. THEY'RE NOT.
LAWRENCE
SALE
STEREO ½ PRICE
ORTHS
THE WHITE QUEEN-- AND THAT ROTTEN HELLFIRE CLUB SHE BELONGS TO-- ARE ANATHEMA TO EVERYTHING *PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL* STANDS FOR.
THOSE CREEPS COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT MUTANTS AS PEOPLE. WE'RE TOOLS TO THEM-- COMMODITIES-- TO BE BOUGHT, SOLD, USED. THROWN AWAY.
THE SAME ATTITUDE-- THE SAME ARROGANCE AND GREED-- THAT SLAUGHTERED THE BUFFALO AND DESTROYED THE HUMAN BEINGS. ALL THE INDIAN NATIONS.
SALE
AUTO
BUT WHAT DO I KNOW?
THE WHITE MAN-- AND HIS WAY OF LIFE-- WON. MAYBE THAT MEANS IT'S BETTER?
WHICH MATTERS MORE...
...SURVIVAL OR HONOR?
SUPPOSE MY RECOVERY *WAS* A FLUKE?
SUPPOSE MAGNETO KEPT THE KIDS, BUT WASN'T ABLE TO HELP THEM? AND THEY STAYED IN SHOCK FOREVER??
WHERE'S THE HONOR-- THE DECENCY-- IN THAT?
IF THE QUEEN CAN HEAL THEM-- WHATEVER HER REASONS--
--ISN'T THAT GOOD?
HAVE I THE RIGHT...
...TO DENY THE KIDS THEIR HAPPINESS?
MAYBE MY FOLKS CAN TELL ME?
THERE YOU GO, LITTLE SPIRIT--
--PASS THE BUCK, LET THEM DECIDE FOR YOU...
...LET THEM TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY.
YO! *PAPOOSE!*
OH, PERFECT.
WHAT ILL WIND BLEW *YOU* INTO TOWN?!
HELLO, PAT.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
NOT LONG ENOUGH, RED.

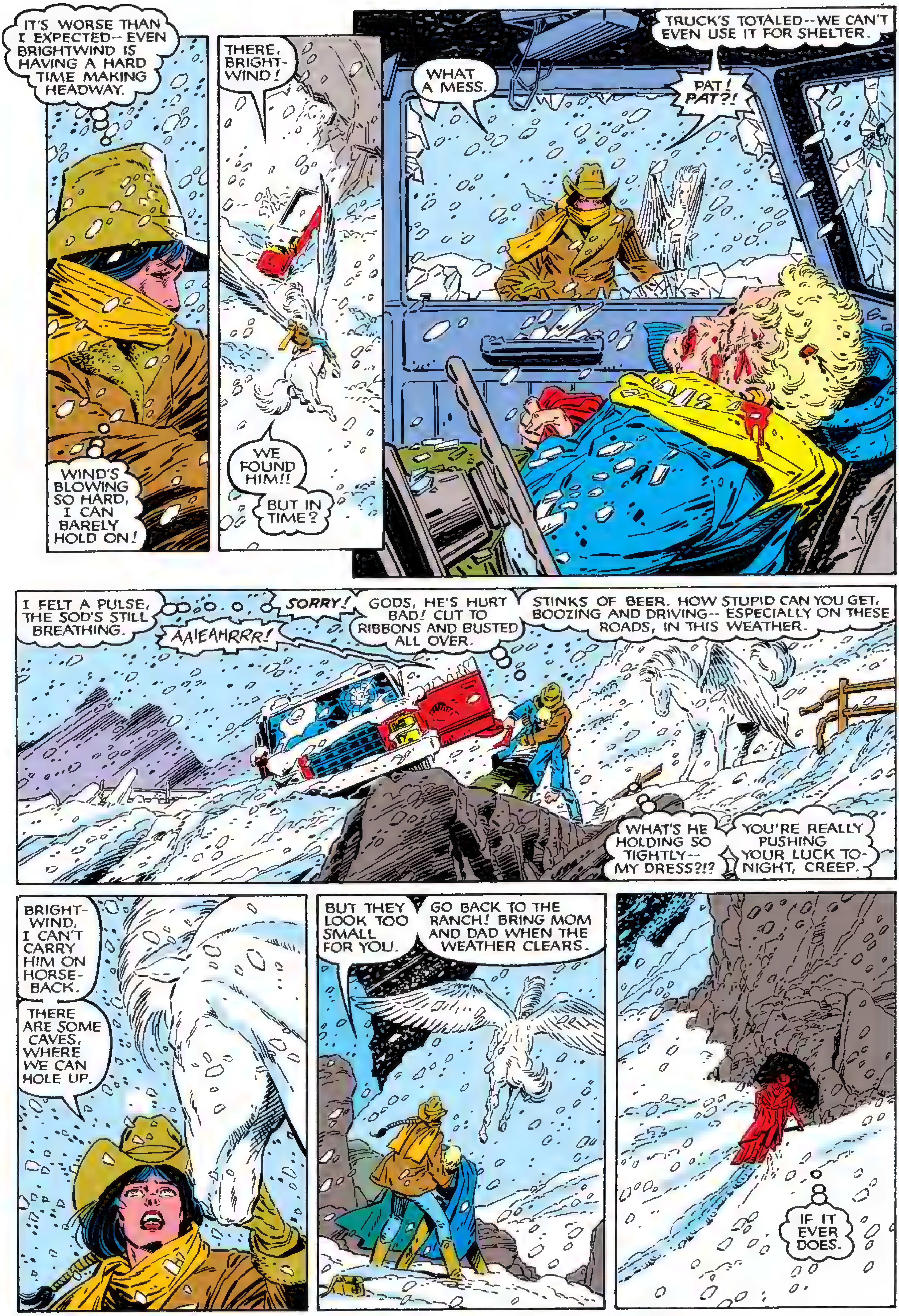

FIGURED YOU WERE GONE FOR GOOD, MOONSTAR-- SHIPPED OFF TO SOME FANCY SCHOOL BACK EAST AFTER YOUR GRAN'PA CROAKED.
BLACK EAGLE WAS MURDERED.
HAPPENS. ESPECIALLY TO RED-SKINS.
I'M HOME VISITING MY PARENTS, IF THAT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS.
I HEARD THEY WERE BACK-- AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS THEY VANISHED-- AN' JUST WHEN MY PA WAS ABOUT TO CLOSE A DEAL FOR THEIR SPREAD. TOO BAD.
LIAR!
OUR RANCH WAS NEVER FOR SALE. AND IT NEVER WILL BE!
WHOA-HO-- THE SQUAW HAS SPUNK!
YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT I SAY, INJUN, OR THE WAY I SAY IT--
--MAKE SOMETHING OF IT.
C'MON. YOU'RE A TOUGH OLD GIRL, DANI. PROVE IT. TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT.
DROP DEAD.
I AIN'T IMPRESSED.
OWHW!
HE-- WANTS ME TO SWING AT HIM...
... SO HE CAN HIT ME BACK.
WE USED TO BE BEST FRIENDS.
BUT INSIDE HIM IT'S ALL TURNED TO HATE...
... BECAUSE OF WHAT I DID--HEY?! LEGGO!!
GIVE THAT BACK!
PRETTY BOX.
HEY, HEY, HEY!
RED, THIS IS WAY TOO NICE AN OUTFIT FOR THE LIKES OF YOU.
ANYONE ELSE INTERESTED?

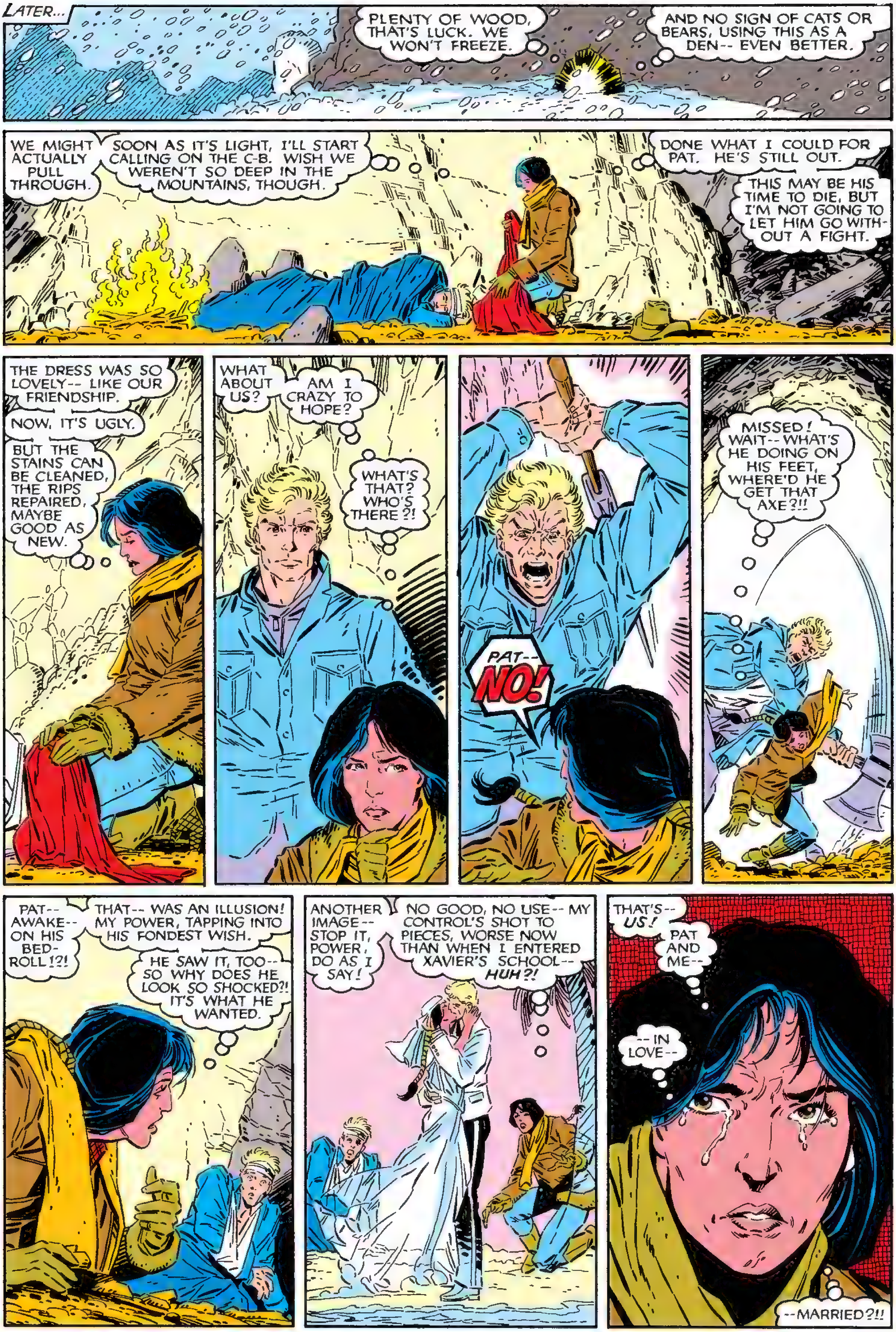

I'M FEELING GENEROUS, DANI. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT ME LIKE A WHITE. YOU CAN USE YOUR STINKING, SPECIAL REDSKIN WAY, HOW'S THAT?!
HE'S DARING ME TO UNLEASH MY POWER...
...LIKE I DID BEFORE--
CAT
--GASP?!?
A DEATH IMAGE!
EMBRACING PAT!
IT'S PART OF THE POWER I HAVE AS A VALKYRIE--
--ITS PRESENCE MEANS THAT, SOMETIME SOON...
...PAT ROBERTS IS GOING TO DIE!
Oh, SPIRITS, IS THIS MY FAULT? DID MY CURSE A MOMENT AGO SUMMON THE REAPER?!
GET AWAY FROM ME, ALL OF YOU--
--GET AWAY!
SHE STRIKES WITH A FURY BORN OF TERROR...
...AND SKILLS TAUGHT HER BY THOSE TO WHOM UNARMED COMBAT IS A WAY OF LIFE.
ONCE FREE OF PAT AND HIS FRIENDS...
A
...SHE RUNS.
CA
WE AIN'T THROUGH, SQUAW, NOT BY A LONG SHOT.
YOU OWE ME BIG, AN' I AIM TO COLLECT FROM YOUR PRETTY RED HIDE!
THERE ARE LOTS OF LONELY ROADS IN YOUR HIGH COUNTRY, INJUN -- I KNOW 'EM AS WELL AS YOU DO--
--AN' IF A BODY DON'T WALK REAL CAREFUL...
...SHE CAN HAVE HERSELF A NASTY ACCIDENT.
MAYBE EVEN A FATAL ONE!

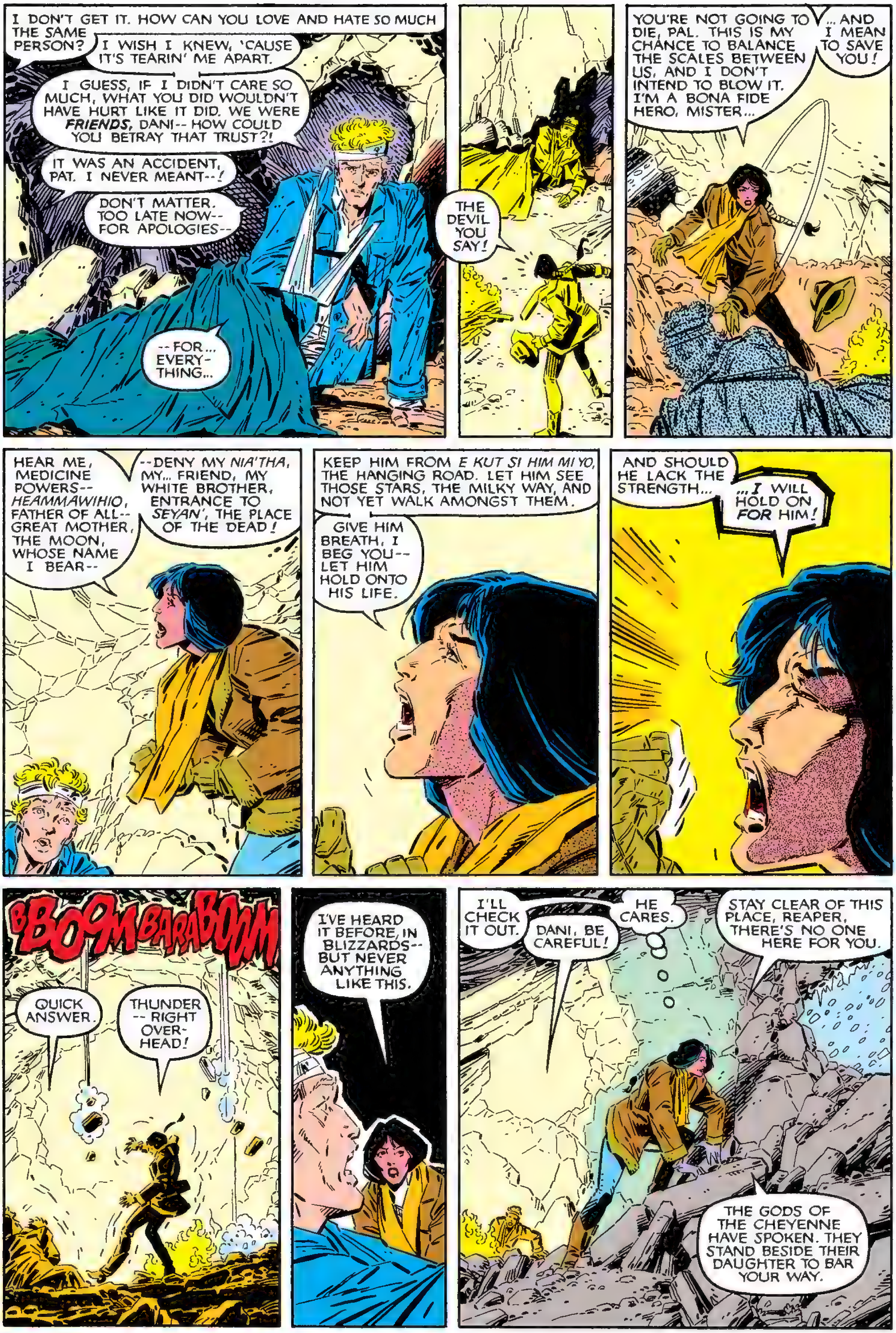

YO, PAT-- CHILL OUT, MAN.
HASSLIN' MOONSTAR WAS ONE THING, BUT YOU'RE TALKIN' CRAZY.
WE'VE HAD OUR FUN, LEAVE HER BE.
GO TO BLAZES!
THIS HAS BEEN EATING ME UP TOO LONG.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IT'S GOING TO BE SETTLED.
CAT
PAT, DON'T DO THIS-- PLEASE! LISTEN TO YOUR FRIENDS!
AIYI-- MIGHT AS WELL COMMAND THE WIND.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?! HOW CAN I PROTECT HIM?! WHY EVEN BOTHER?!
HE'S IN MORTAL PERIL-- BUT TRY TELLING HIM THAT, HE'D LAUGH IN MY FACE. BEFORE GOING FOR MY THROAT.
IF OUR POSITIONS WERE REVERSED, HE'D PROBABLY CHEER DEATH ON.
HE WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THAT, THOUGH.
ONCE-- ANCIENT HISTORY-- WE WERE AS TIGHT, AS INSEPARABLE, AS ME AND BRIGHTWIND.
THAT CAR--THE INTERSECTION-- PAT, *LOOK OUT!!*
"IS THIS THE MOMENT--?!
SCREEEE
BEEPBEEEEEEP!
"NO, THANK THE SPIRITS. NOT YET.
"I CAN'T STAY ANY LONGER. THE STORM'S WORSENING BY THE MINUTE.
INSULIN
"I HAVE TO HEAD HOME.
"PAT, IF YOU'VE ANY SENSE, YOU'LL DO THE SAME.
INSULIN
HANDLE WITH CARE
LONE STAR
BEER

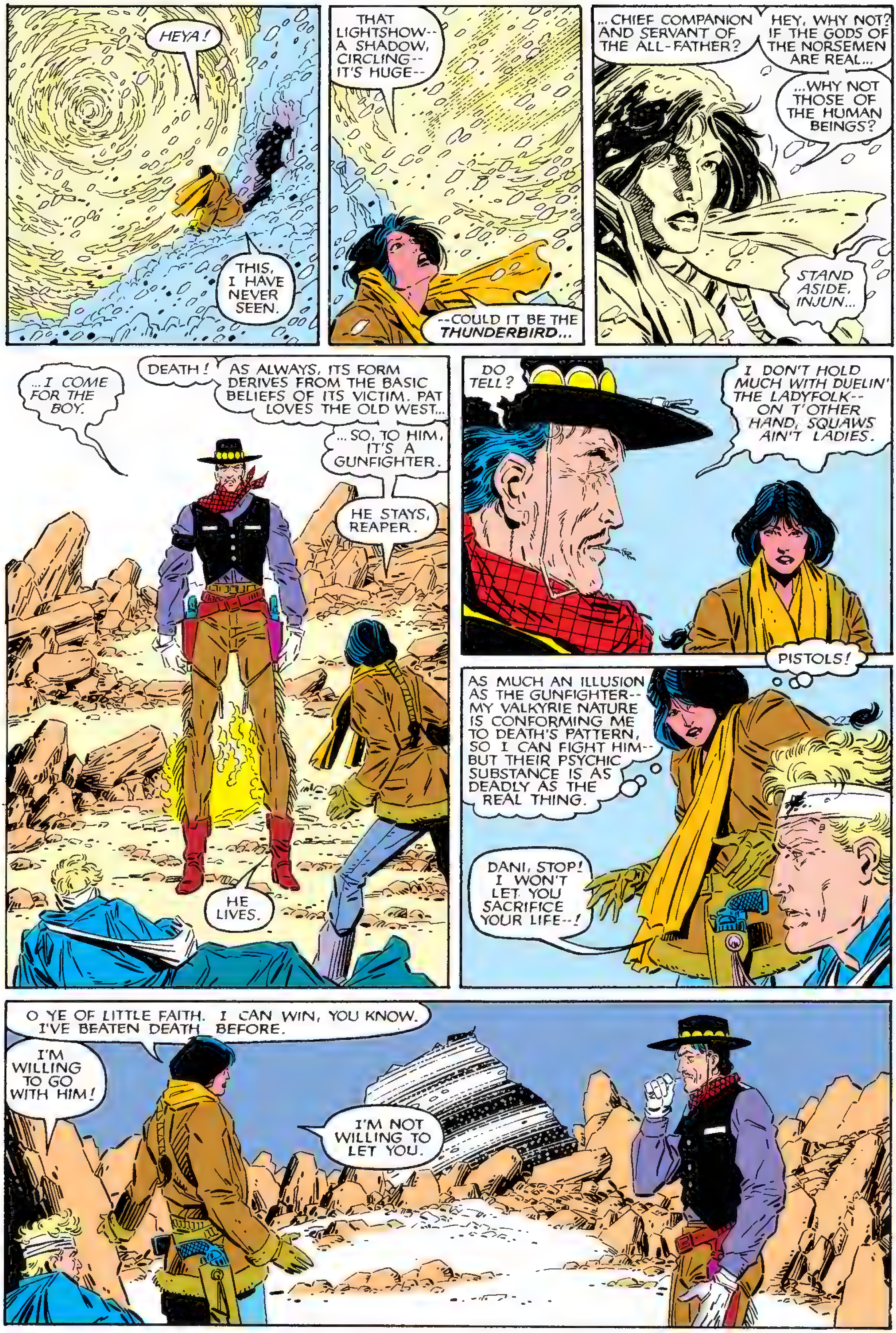

ANOTHER DAWN...
... BRINGS ANOTHER ALL-TOO-BRIEF RESPITE FROM WINTER'S FURY, AND A CHANCE FOR DANI TO MAKE A DENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES.
THINGS ARE FINE HERE, DAD.
COUNTY MAY EVEN HAVE A ROAD OPEN TO US BY NIGHTFALL, OVER.
WHAT'S THIS YOUR MOTHER SAYS ABOUT YOU HAVING A RUN-IN WITH PAT ROBERTS?
NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.
BE CAREFUL. HE ISN'T THE BOY WE REMEMBER.
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
TAKE CARE, YOU TWO. BE SEEING YOU SOON, I HOPE.
RAINBOW VALLEY, OVER AND OUT.
WHATEVER PAT'S BECOME, I'M PARTLY TO BLAME.
IS HE STILL OKAY? I SHOULD HAVE STAYED WITH HIM YESTERDAY. BUT IT WAS EASIER TO ABANDON HIM. GETS EASIER EVERY TIME.
THE FOLKS KNOW I'M A MUTANT, BUT HOW WILL THEY REACT TO MY BECOMING A VALKYRIE?
WHAT DO I DO THE DAY THE REAPER COMES FOR THEM? WHAT IF I TRY TO SAVE THEM AND FAIL?!
Oh, PAT--!
I TAUGHT HIM TO RIDE.
HE TAUGHT ME TO SHOOT, RIFLE AND BOW.
I'D BEEN WITH HIS FAMILY A WEEK, BRIGHTWIND.
I WAS SCARED AND LONELY, A CAGED WILDCAT DRESSED UP AS A LITTLE GIRL. WE WERE AT SUNDAY DINNER, WITH HIS WHOLE FAMILY.
PAT SAID SOMETHING, I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT, AND I SNAPPED INSIDE, HIT HIM FULL FORCE WITH A POWER I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD.
I GRABBED HIS GREATEST FEAR AND DESIRE, AND HAULED THEM OUT FOR HIS KIN TO SEE.

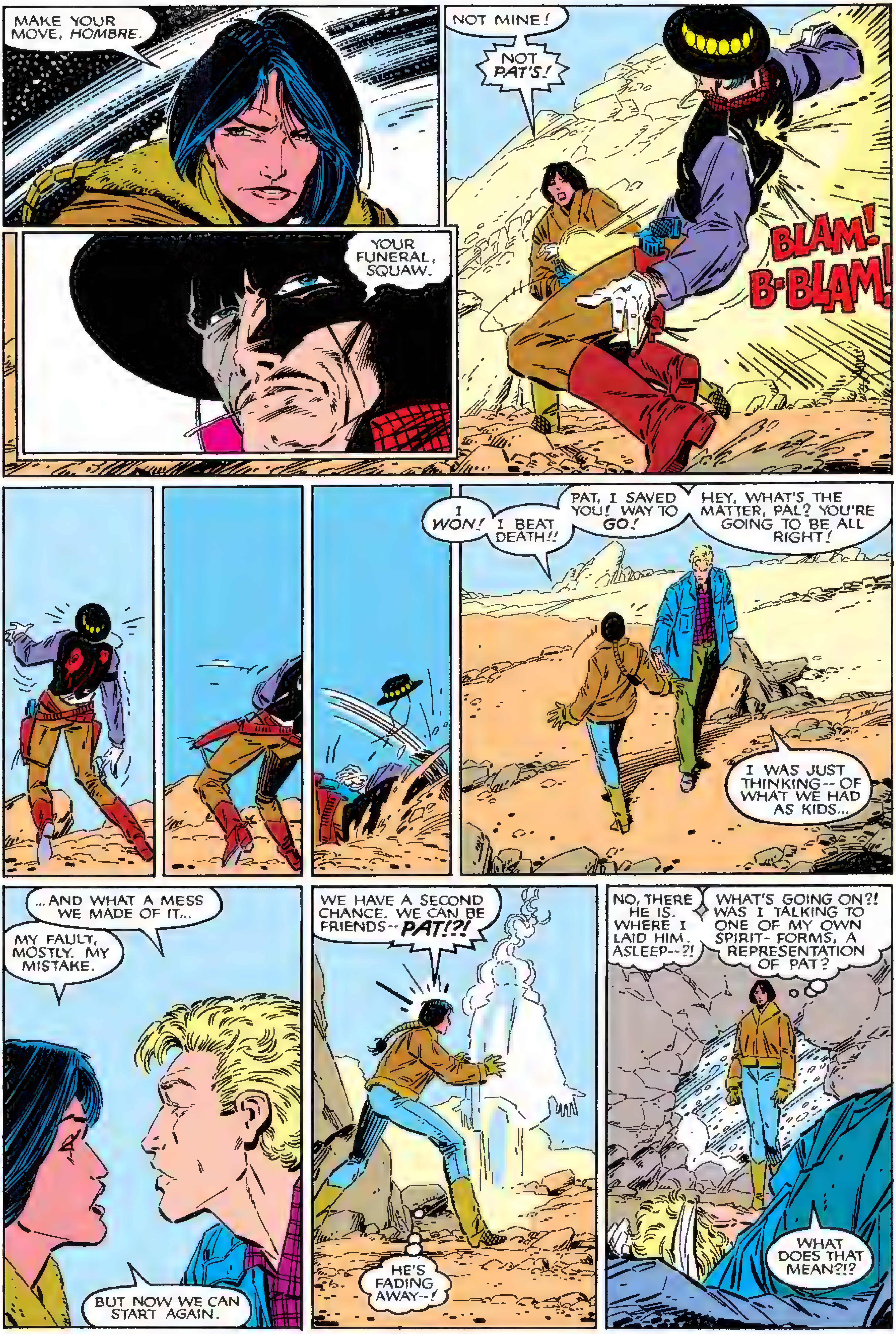

I SHOULD HAVE STAYED. WE'D HAVE GONE OUT BACK AND HAD IT OUT, FACE TO FACE, FIST TO FIST. BUT I RAN. I NEVER GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXORCISE THE RAGE AND HURT AND... SHAME.
NEVER GAVE MYSELF THAT CHANCE, EITHER.
ZKRLKRT-- DAY... ANY...BZZKTION ...CRACKLE... IN...
EMERGENCY FREQUENCY! SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE!
THIS IS RAINBOW VALLEY, RECEIVING YOU-- BUT YOUR SIGNAL IS VERY WEAK, BREAKING UP, OVER!
... HELLO... HELLO... ANYONE... PAT... BERTS... OFF ROAD... HIGHWAY 27... MILE MARKER 40... HOLDEN'S BUTTE... HURT... MAYDAY... MAYDAY...
HIS SIGNAL'S FADING.
PAT?! PAT, IT'S DANI! PAT!?!
LOST HIM. HIS BATTERY MUST BE NEARLY GONE. IT'S A MIRACLE I HEARD HIM.
I'LL CALL THE STATE POLICE. THEY CAN GET A JEEP OR CHOPPER -- oh, NO!
NOTHING BUT STATIC. STORM ATMOSPHERICS ARE LOUSING UP THE AIRWAVES.
I CAN'T RAISE ANYONE.
MAYBE THE PHONE--?!
NOT EVEN A DIAL TONE. LINES MUST BE DOWN.
THIS CAN'T WAIT. I BET NO ONE ELSE HEARD PAT'S CALL. IF HE'S HURT-- WITH THE TEMPERATURE DROPPING THE WAY IT IS-- HE WON'T LAST THE NIGHT.
MEDKIT, BLANKETS, PORTABLE CB, MY HEAVIEST COAT-- THAT'S EVERYTHING I CAN SAFELY CARRY.
FIRST A
LET'S RIDE, BRIGHTWIND!
FAST AS YOU CAN, PARTNER, OVER THAT BIG RIDGE--
--PERFECT, RIGHT INTO THE TEETH OF THE BLIZZARD.

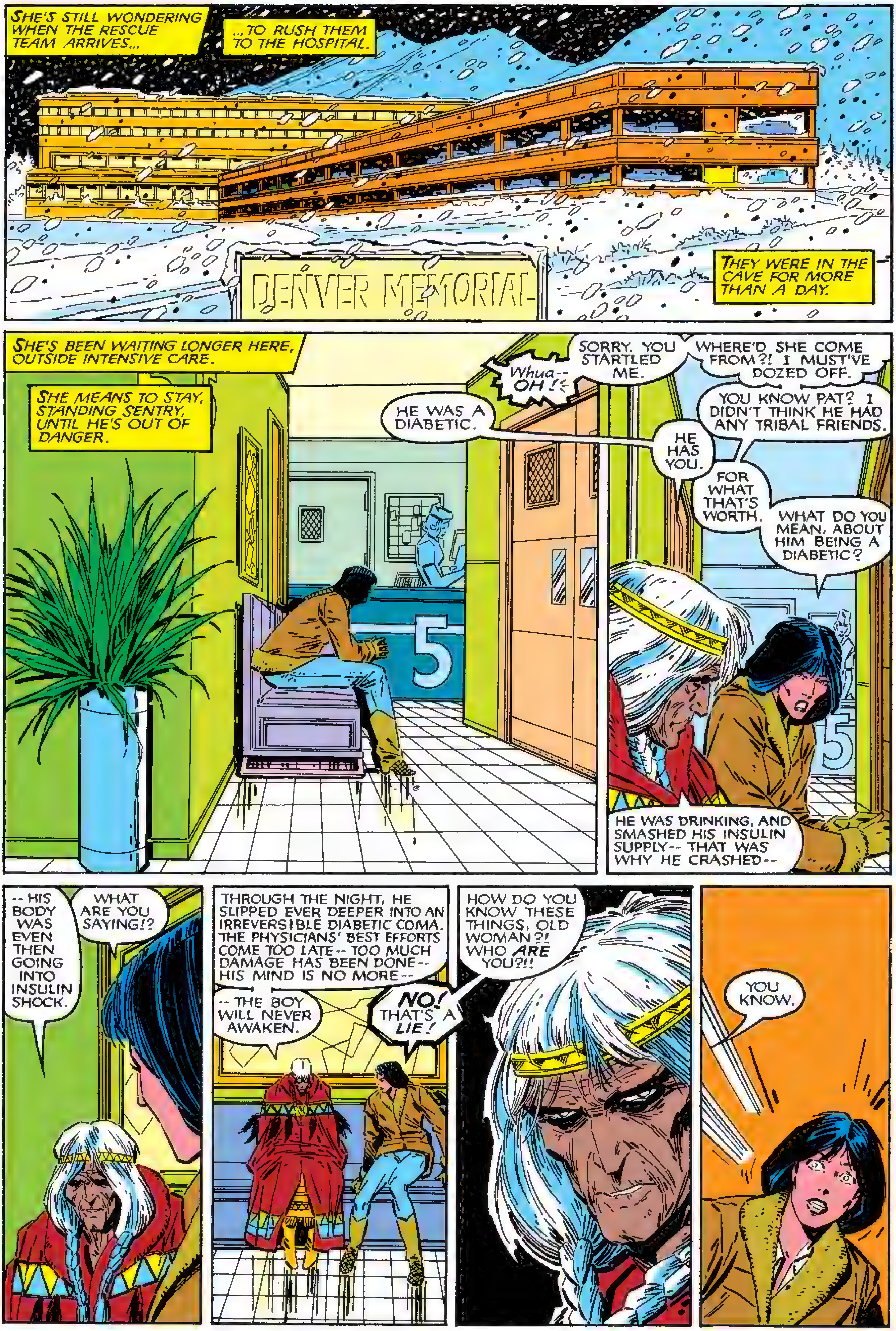

IT'S WORSE THAN I EXPECTED-- EVEN BRIGHTWIND IS HAVING A HARD TIME MAKING HEADWAY.
WIND'S BLOWING SO HARD, I CAN BARELY HOLD ON!
THERE, BRIGHTWIND!
WE FOUND HIM!!
BUT IN TIME?
TRUCK'S TOTALED--WE CAN'T EVEN USE IT FOR SHELTER.
WHAT A MESS.
PAT! *PAT?!*
I FELT A PULSE. THE SOD'S STILL BREATHING.
AAIEAHRRR!
*SORRY!*
GODS, HE'S HURT BAD! CUT TO RIBBONS AND BUSTED ALL OVER.
STINKS OF BEER. HOW STUPID CAN YOU GET, BOOZING AND DRIVING-- ESPECIALLY ON THESE ROADS, IN THIS WEATHER.
WHAT'S HE HOLDING SO TIGHTLY-- MY DRESS?!?
YOU'RE REALLY PUSHING YOUR LUCK TONIGHT, CREEP.
BRIGHTWIND, I CAN'T CARRY HIM ON HORSEBACK.
THERE ARE SOME CAVES, WHERE WE CAN HOLE UP.
BUT THEY LOOK TOO SMALL FOR YOU.
GO BACK TO THE RANCH! BRING MOM AND DAD WHEN THE WEATHER CLEARS.
IF IT EVER DOES.

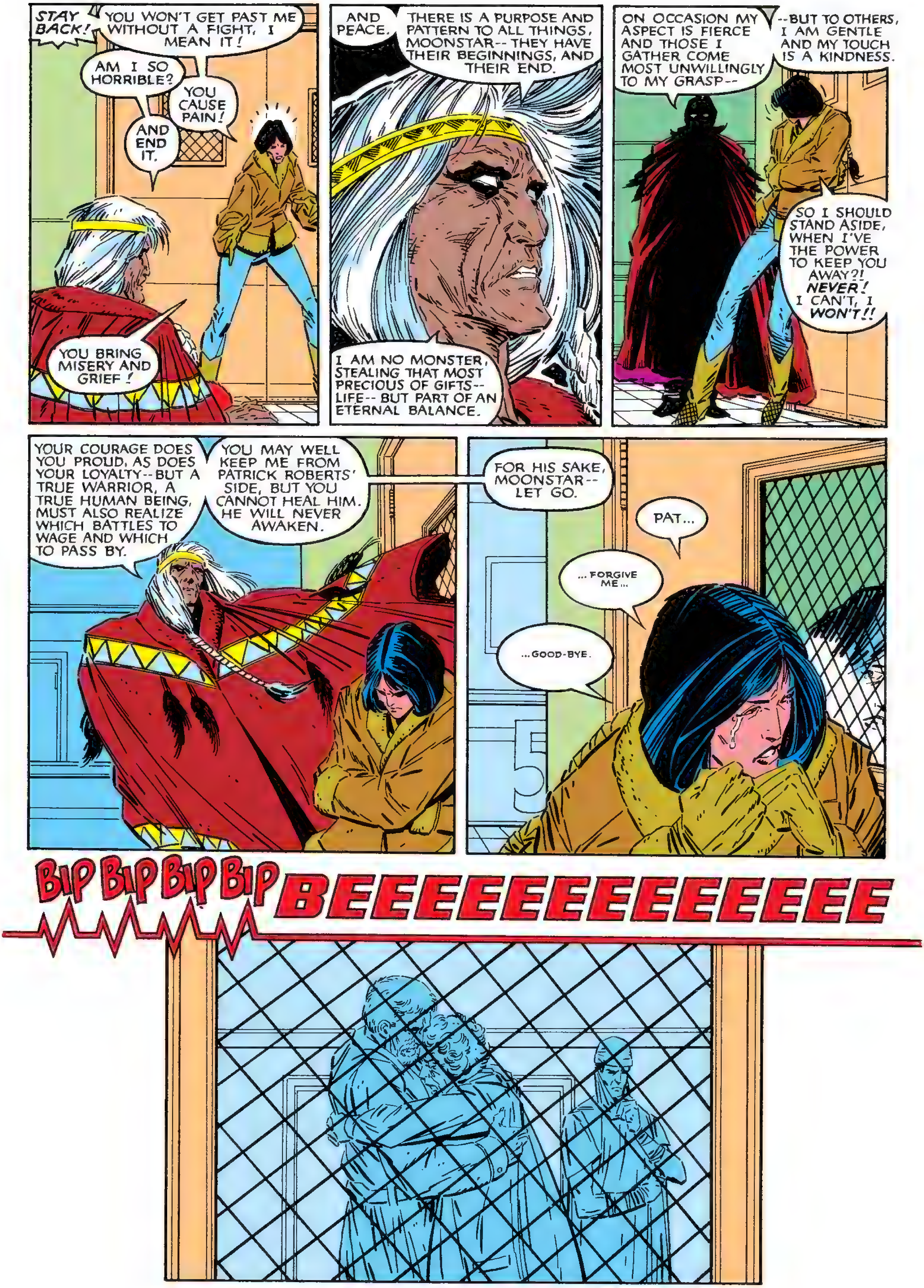

LATER...
PLENTY OF WOOD, THAT'S LUCK. WE WON'T FREEZE.
AND NO SIGN OF CATS OR BEARS, USING THIS AS A DEN-- EVEN BETTER.
WE MIGHT ACTUALLY PULL THROUGH.
SOON AS IT'S LIGHT, I'LL START CALLING ON THE C-B. WISH WE WEREN'T SO DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS, THOUGH.
DONE WHAT I COULD FOR PAT. HE'S STILL OUT.
THIS MAY BE HIS TIME TO DIE, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM GO WITHOUT A FIGHT.
THE DRESS WAS SO LOVELY-- LIKE OUR FRIENDSHIP.
NOW, IT'S UGLY.
BUT THE STAINS CAN BE CLEANED, THE RIPS REPAIRED, MAYBE GOOD AS NEW.
WHAT ABOUT US?
AM I CRAZY TO HOPE?
WHAT'S THAT? WHO'S THERE?!
PAT-- NO!
MISSED! WAIT-- WHAT'S HE DOING ON HIS FEET, WHERE'D HE GET THAT AXE?!!
PAT-- AWAKE-- ON HIS BED-ROLL!?!
THAT-- WAS AN ILLUSION! MY POWER, TAPPING INTO HIS FONDEST WISH.
HE SAW IT, TOO-- SO WHY DOES HE LOOK SO SHOCKED?! IT'S WHAT HE WANTED.
ANOTHER IMAGE-- STOP IT, POWER, DO AS I SAY!
NO GOOD, NO USE-- MY CONTROL'S SHOT TO PIECES, WORSE NOW THAN WHEN I ENTERED XAVIER'S SCHOOL-- HUH?!
THAT'S-- US!
PAT AND ME--
-- IN LOVE--
--MARRIED?!!

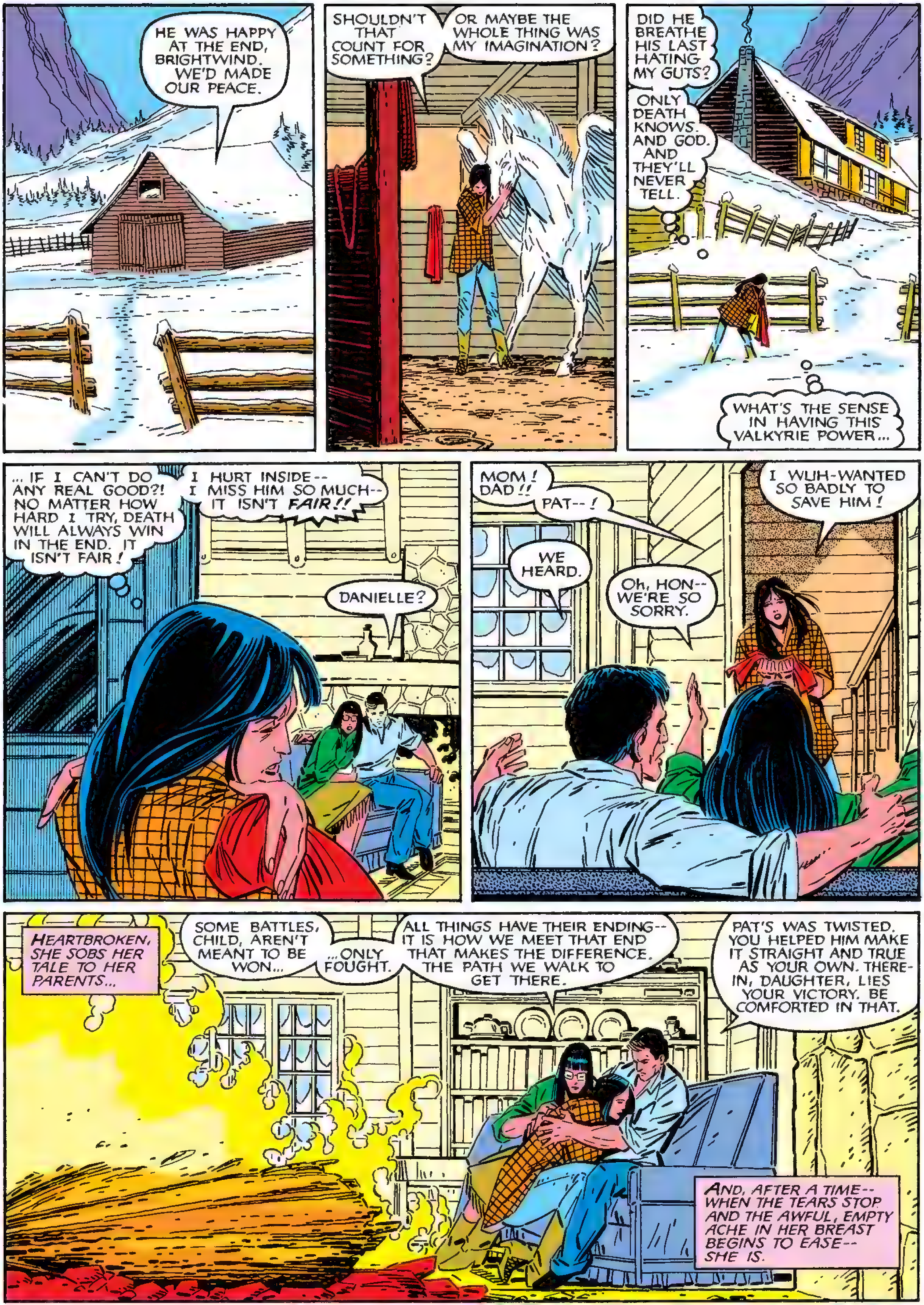

I DON'T GET IT. HOW CAN YOU LOVE AND HATE SO MUCH THE SAME PERSON?
I WISH I KNEW, 'CAUSE IT'S TEARIN' ME APART.
I GUESS, IF I DIDN'T CARE SO MUCH, WHAT YOU DID WOULDN'T HAVE HURT LIKE IT DID. WE WERE **FRIENDS**, DANI-- HOW COULD YOU BETRAY THAT TRUST?!
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, PAT. I NEVER MEANT--!
DON'T MATTER. TOO LATE NOW-- FOR APOLOGIES--
--FOR... EVERYTHING...
THE DEVIL YOU SAY!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE, PAL. THIS IS MY CHANCE TO BALANCE THE SCALES BETWEEN US, AND I DON'T INTEND TO BLOW IT. I'M A BONA FIDE HERO, MISTER...
...AND I MEAN TO SAVE YOU!
HEAR ME, MEDICINE POWERS-- *HEAMMAWIHIO*, FATHER OF ALL-- GREAT MOTHER, THE MOON, WHOSE NAME I BEAR--
--DENY MY *NIA'THA*, MY... FRIEND, MY WHITE BROTHER, ENTRANCE TO *SEYAN'*, THE PLACE OF THE DEAD!
KEEP HIM FROM *E KUT SI HIM MI YO*, THE HANGING ROAD. LET HIM SEE THOSE STARS, THE MILKY WAY, AND NOT YET WALK AMONGST THEM.
GIVE HIM BREATH, I BEG YOU-- LET HIM HOLD ONTO HIS LIFE.
AND SHOULD HE LACK THE STRENGTH...
...**I** WILL HOLD ON **FOR** HIM!
BBOOMBARABOOM
QUICK ANSWER.
THUNDER -- RIGHT OVERHEAD!
I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE, IN BLIZZARDS-- BUT NEVER ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
I'LL CHECK IT OUT.
DANI, BE CAREFUL!
HE CARES.
STAY CLEAR OF THIS PLACE, REAPER, THERE'S NO ONE HERE FOR YOU.
THE GODS OF THE CHEYENNE HAVE SPOKEN. THEY STAND BESIDE THEIR DAUGHTER TO BAR YOUR WAY.


HEYA!
THIS, I HAVE NEVER SEEN.
THAT LIGHTSHOW-- A SHADOW, CIRCLING-- IT'S HUGE--
--COULD IT BE THE *THUNDERBIRD*...
...CHIEF COMPANION AND SERVANT OF THE ALL-FATHER?
HEY, WHY NOT? IF THE GODS OF THE NORSEMEN ARE REAL...
...WHY NOT THOSE OF THE HUMAN BEINGS?
*STAND ASIDE, INJUN...*
*...I COME FOR THE BOY.*
DEATH!
AS ALWAYS, ITS FORM DERIVES FROM THE BASIC BELIEFS OF ITS VICTIM. PAT LOVES THE OLD WEST...
...SO, TO HIM, IT'S A GUNFIGHTER.
HE STAYS, REAPER.
HE LIVES.
*DO TELL?*
*I DON'T HOLD MUCH WITH DUELIN' THE LADYFOLK-- ON T'OTHER HAND, SQUAWS AIN'T LADIES.*
PISTOLS!
AS MUCH AN ILLUSION AS THE GUNFIGHTER-- MY VALKYRIE NATURE IS CONFORMING ME TO DEATH'S PATTERN, SO I CAN FIGHT HIM-- BUT THEIR PSYCHIC SUBSTANCE IS AS DEADLY AS THE REAL THING.
DANI, STOP! I WON'T LET YOU SACRIFICE YOUR LIFE--!
O YE OF LITTLE FAITH. I CAN WIN, YOU KNOW. I'VE BEATEN DEATH BEFORE.
I'M WILLING TO GO WITH HIM!
I'M NOT WILLING TO LET YOU.


MAKE YOUR MOVE, *HOMBRE.*
YOUR FUNERAL, SQUAW.
NOT MINE!
NOT *PAT'S!*
BLAM! B-BLAM!
I *WON!*
I BEAT DEATH!!
PAT, I SAVED YOU! WAY TO *GO!*
HEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER, PAL? YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
I WAS JUST THINKING--OF WHAT WE HAD AS KIDS...
...AND WHAT A MESS WE MADE OF IT...
MY FAULT, MOSTLY. MY MISTAKE.
BUT NOW WE CAN START AGAIN.
WE HAVE A SECOND CHANCE. WE CAN BE FRIENDS--*PAT!?!*
HE'S FADING AWAY--!
NO, THERE HE IS, WHERE I LAID HIM, ASLEEP--?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?! WAS I TALKING TO ONE OF MY OWN SPIRIT-FORMS, A REPRESENTATION OF PAT?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?!?


SHE'S STILL WONDERING WHEN THE RESCUE TEAM ARRIVES...
...TO RUSH THEM TO THE HOSPITAL.
DENVER MEMORIAL
THEY WERE IN THE CAVE FOR MORE THAN A DAY.
SHE'S BEEN WAITING LONGER HERE, OUTSIDE INTENSIVE CARE.
SHE MEANS TO STAY, STANDING SENTRY, UNTIL HE'S OUT OF DANGER.
HE WAS A DIABETIC.
5
Whua-- OH!
SORRY. YOU STARTLED ME.
WHERE'D SHE COME FROM?! I MUST'VE DOZED OFF.
YOU KNOW PAT? I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD ANY TRIBAL FRIENDS.
HE HAS YOU.
FOR WHAT THAT'S WORTH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ABOUT HIM BEING A DIABETIC?
5
HE WAS DRINKING, AND SMASHED HIS INSULIN SUPPLY-- THAT WAS WHY HE CRASHED--
--HIS BODY WAS EVEN THEN GOING INTO INSULIN SHOCK.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
THROUGH THE NIGHT, HE SLIPPED EVER DEEPER INTO AN IRREVERSIBLE DIABETIC COMA. THE PHYSICIANS' BEST EFFORTS COME TOO LATE-- TOO MUCH DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE-- HIS MIND IS NO MORE--
--THE BOY WILL NEVER AWAKEN.
NO! THAT'S A LIE!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THESE THINGS, OLD WOMAN?! WHO ARE YOU?!!
YOU KNOW.


STAY BACK!
YOU WON'T GET PAST ME WITHOUT A FIGHT, I MEAN IT!
AM I SO HORRIBLE?
YOU CAUSE PAIN!
AND END IT.
YOU BRING MISERY AND GRIEF!
AND PEACE.
THERE IS A PURPOSE AND PATTERN TO ALL THINGS, MOONSTAR-- THEY HAVE THEIR BEGINNINGS, AND THEIR END.
I AM NO MONSTER, STEALING THAT MOST PRECIOUS OF GIFTS-- LIFE-- BUT PART OF AN ETERNAL BALANCE.
ON OCCASION MY ASPECT IS FIERCE AND THOSE I GATHER COME MOST UNWILLINGLY TO MY GRASP--
--BUT TO OTHERS, I AM GENTLE AND MY TOUCH IS A KINDNESS.
SO I SHOULD STAND ASIDE, WHEN I'VE THE POWER TO KEEP YOU AWAY?! NEVER! I CAN'T, I WON'T!!
YOUR COURAGE DOES YOU PROUD, AS DOES YOUR LOYALTY--BUT A TRUE WARRIOR, A TRUE HUMAN BEING, MUST ALSO REALIZE WHICH BATTLES TO WAGE AND WHICH TO PASS BY.
YOU MAY WELL KEEP ME FROM PATRICK ROBERTS' SIDE, BUT YOU CANNOT HEAL HIM. HE WILL NEVER AWAKEN.
FOR HIS SAKE, MOONSTAR-- LET GO.
PAT...
...FORGIVE ME...
...GOOD-BYE.
5
BIP BIP BIP BIP
BEEEEEEEEEEEE


HE WAS HAPPY AT THE END, BRIGHTWIND. WE'D MADE OUR PEACE.
SHOULDN'T THAT COUNT FOR SOMETHING?
OR MAYBE THE WHOLE THING WAS MY IMAGINATION?
DID HE BREATHE HIS LAST HATING MY GUTS?
ONLY DEATH KNOWS. AND GOD. AND THEY'LL NEVER TELL.
WHAT'S THE SENSE IN HAVING THIS VALKYRIE POWER...
... IF I CAN'T DO ANY REAL GOOD?! NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, DEATH WILL ALWAYS WIN IN THE END. IT ISN'T FAIR!
I HURT INSIDE-- I MISS HIM SO MUCH-- IT ISN'T FAIR!!
DANIELLE?
MOM! DAD!!
PAT--!
I WUH-WANTED SO BADLY TO SAVE HIM!
WE HEARD.
Oh, HON-- WE'RE SO SORRY.
HEARTBROKEN, SHE SOBS HER TALE TO HER PARENTS...
SOME BATTLES, CHILD, AREN'T MEANT TO BE WON...
...ONLY FOUGHT.
ALL THINGS HAVE THEIR ENDING-- IT IS HOW WE MEET THAT END THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE. THE PATH WE WALK TO GET THERE.
PAT'S WAS TWISTED. YOU HELPED HIM MAKE IT STRAIGHT AND TRUE AS YOUR OWN. THEREIN, DAUGHTER, LIES YOUR VICTORY. BE COMFORTED IN THAT.
AND, AFTER A TIME-- WHEN THE TEARS STOP AND THE AWFUL, EMPTY ACHE IN HER BREAST BEGINS TO EASE-- SHE IS.

*NEXT: THE MUTANTS ARE BACK TOGETHER AGAIN AND UPPERMOST IN THEIR MINDS IS*

**GETTING EVEN!**

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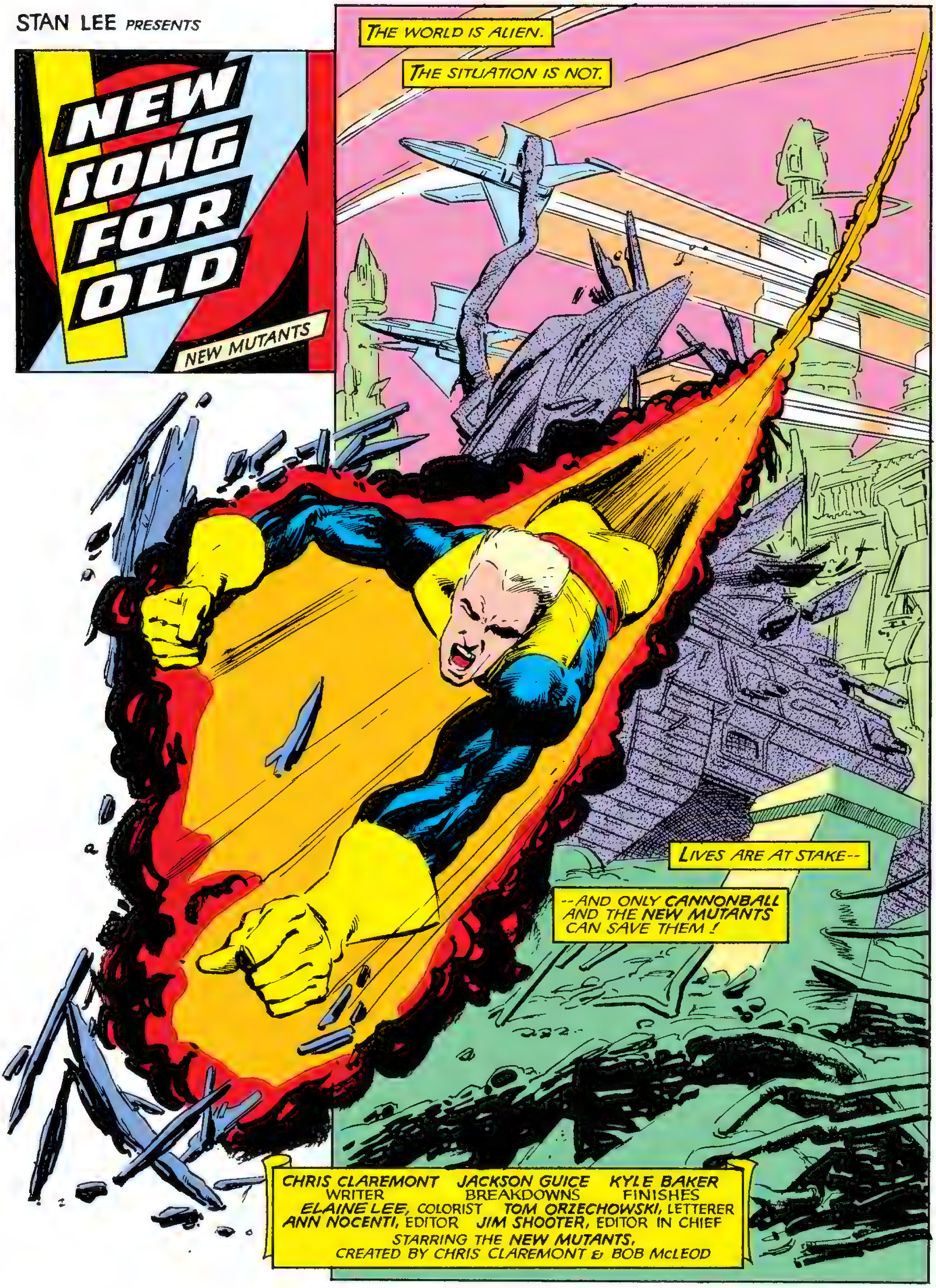
STAN LEE PRESENTS
NEW SONG FOR OLD
NEW MUTANTS
THE WORLD IS ALIEN.
THE SITUATION IS NOT.
LIVES ARE AT STAKE--
--AND ONLY CANNONBALL AND THE NEW MUTANTS CAN SAVE THEM!
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
JACKSON GUICE BREAKDOWNS
KYLE BAKER FINISHES
ELAINE LEE, COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS, CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT & BOB McLEOD

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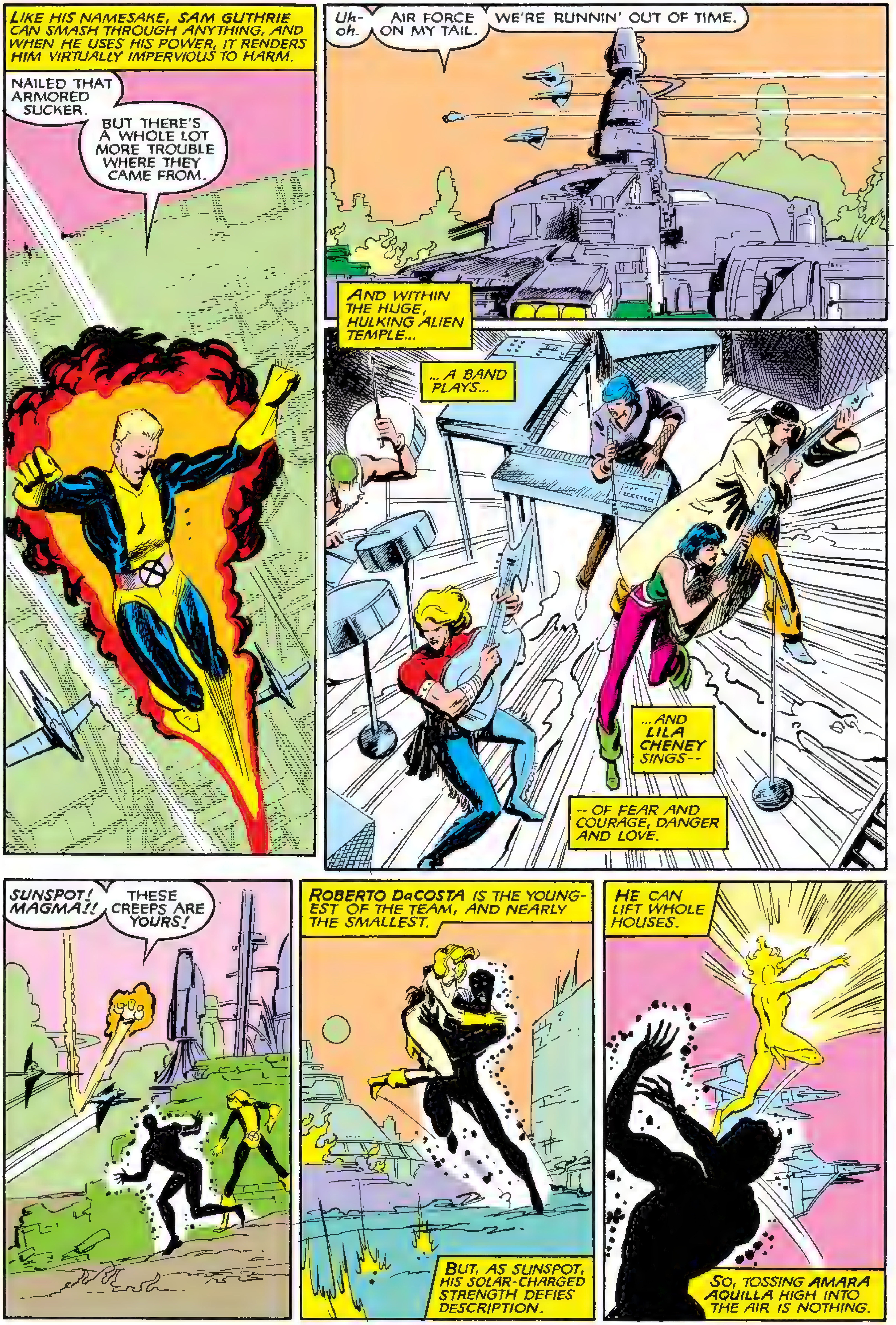
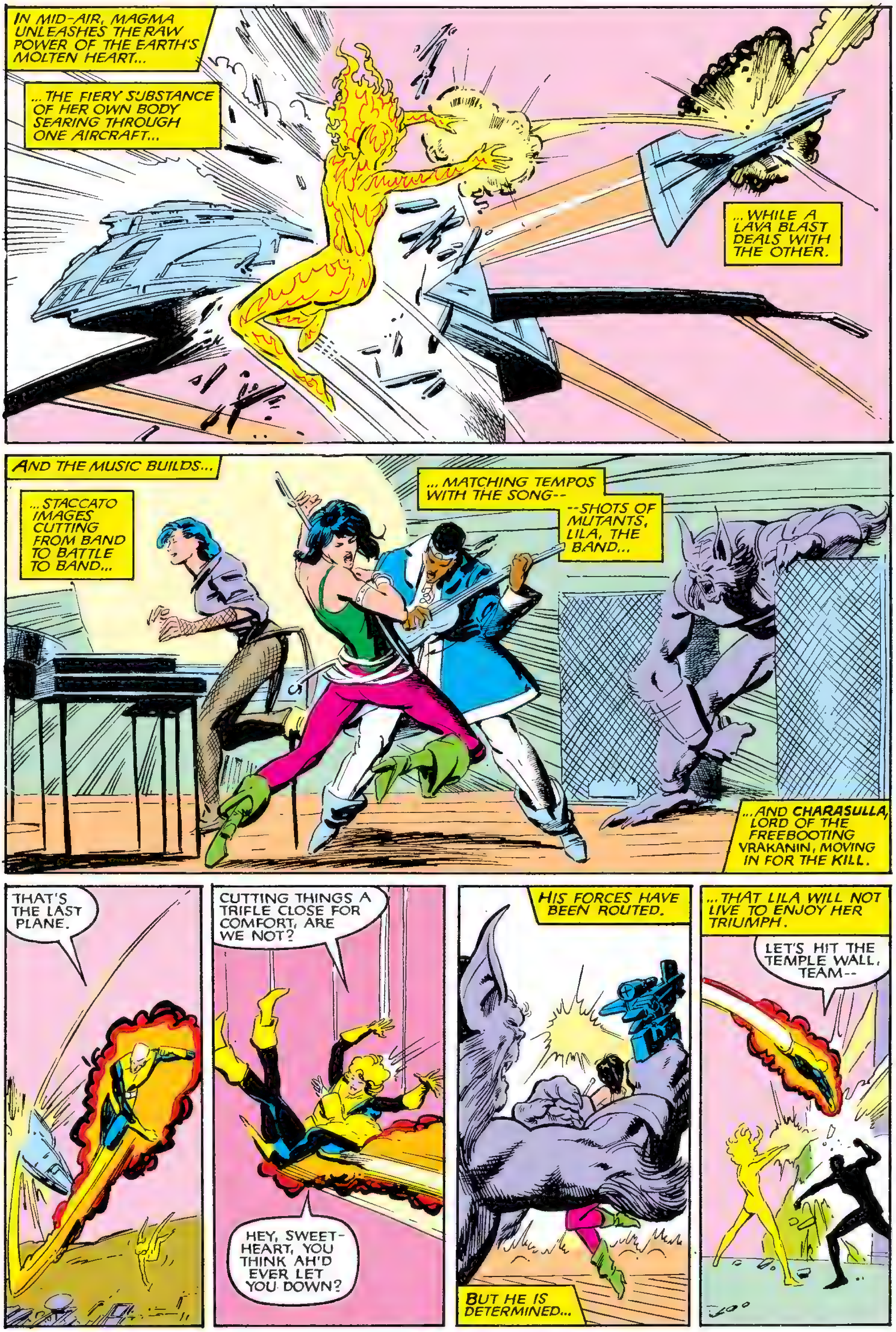
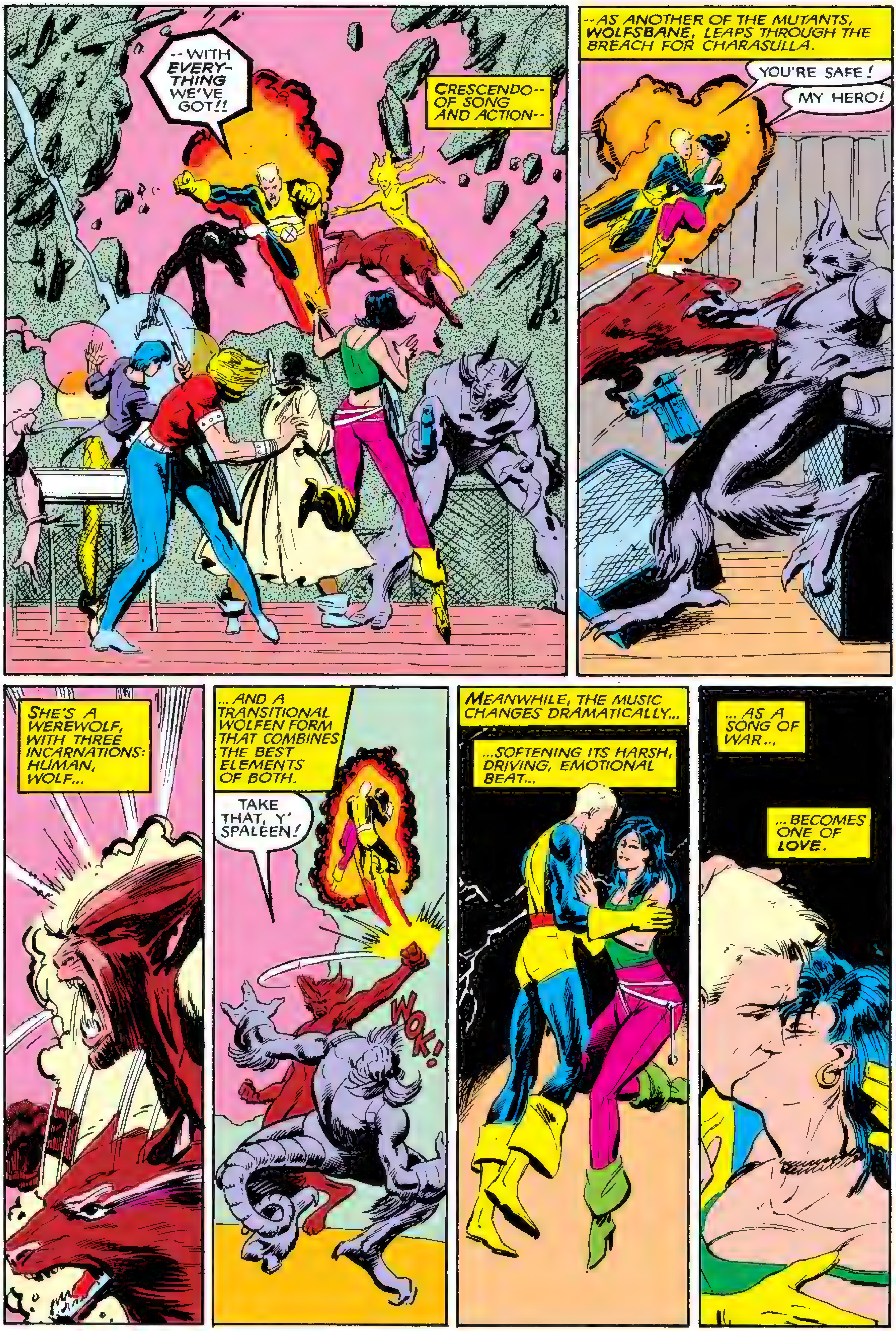
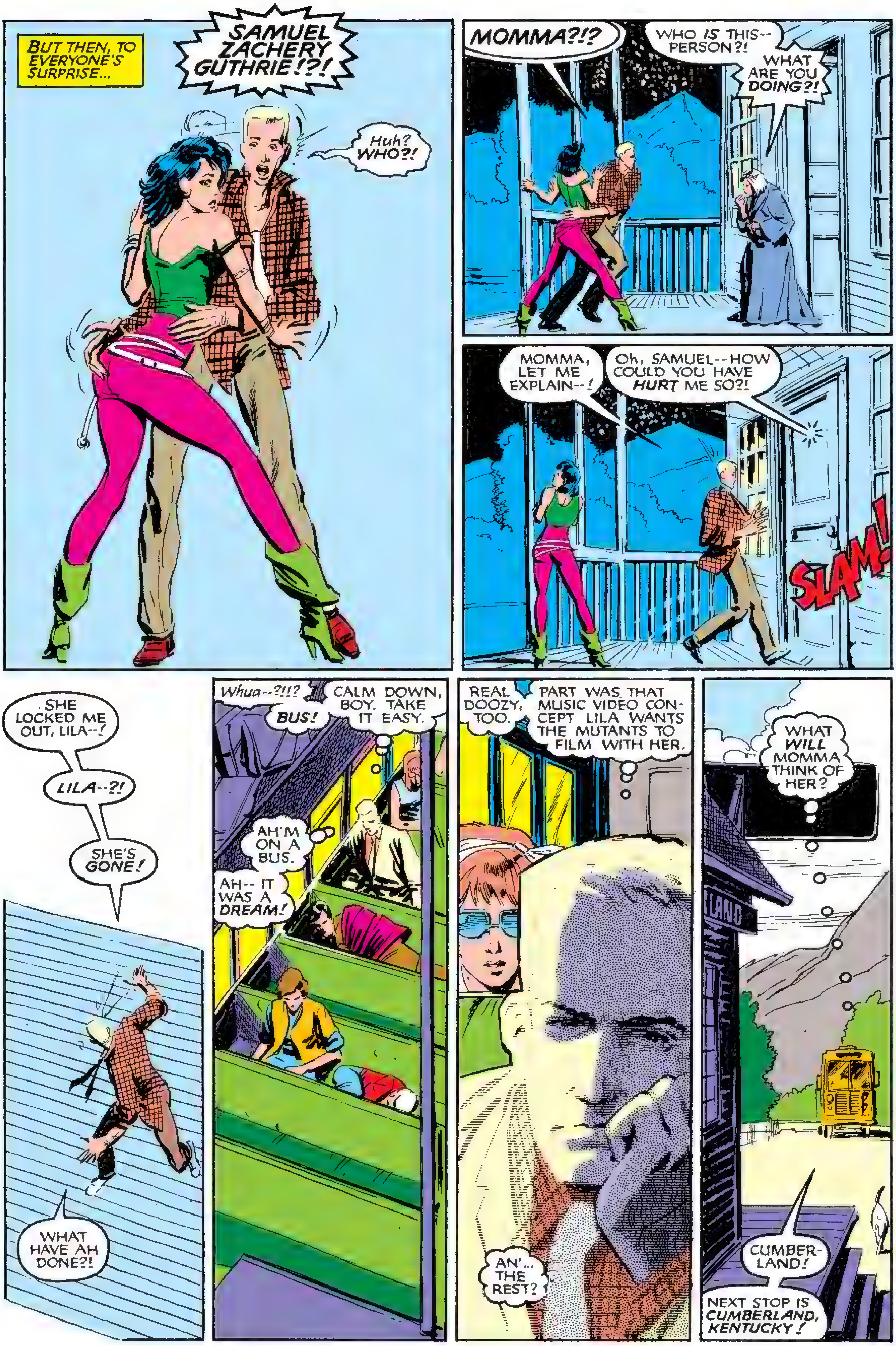
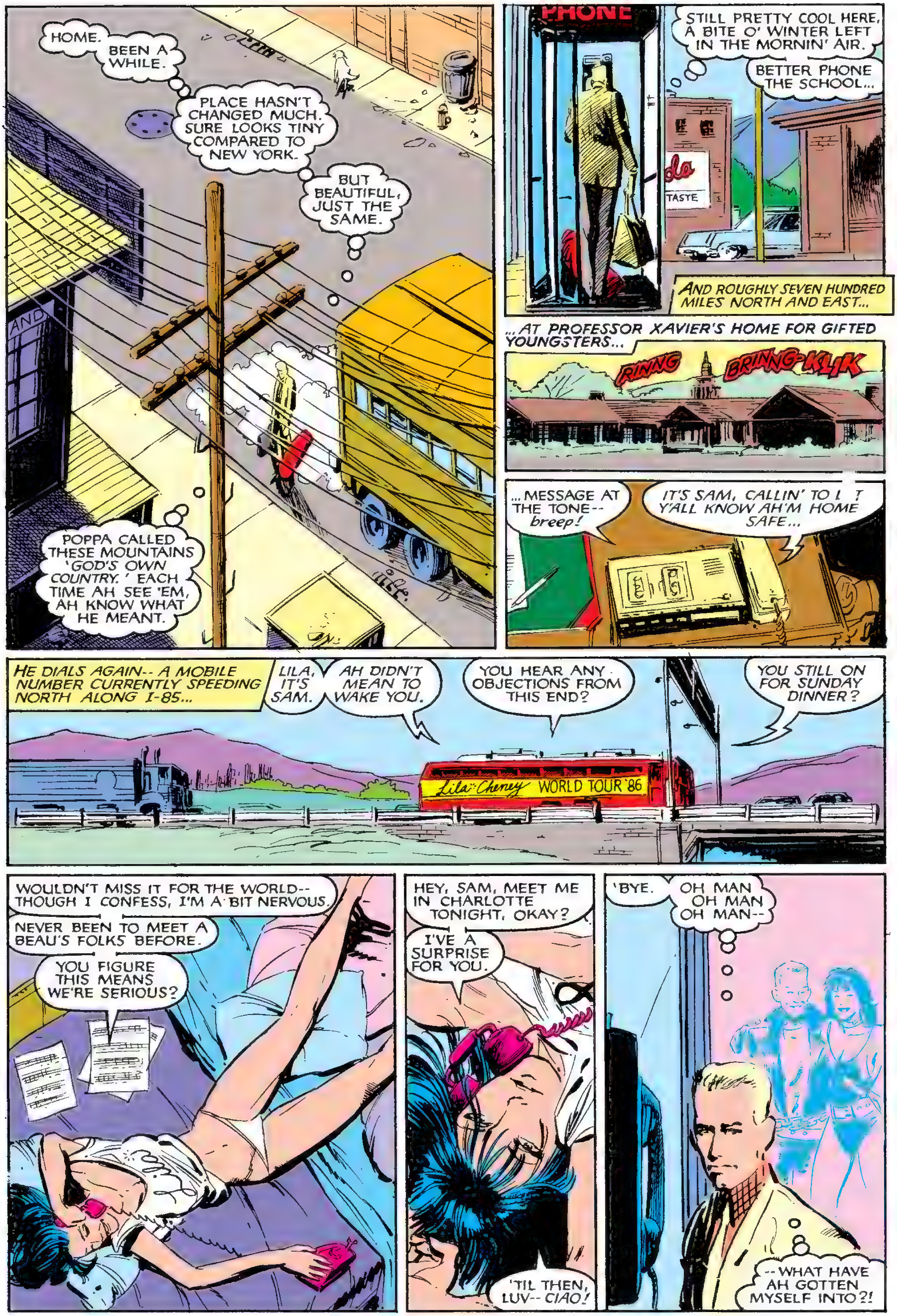
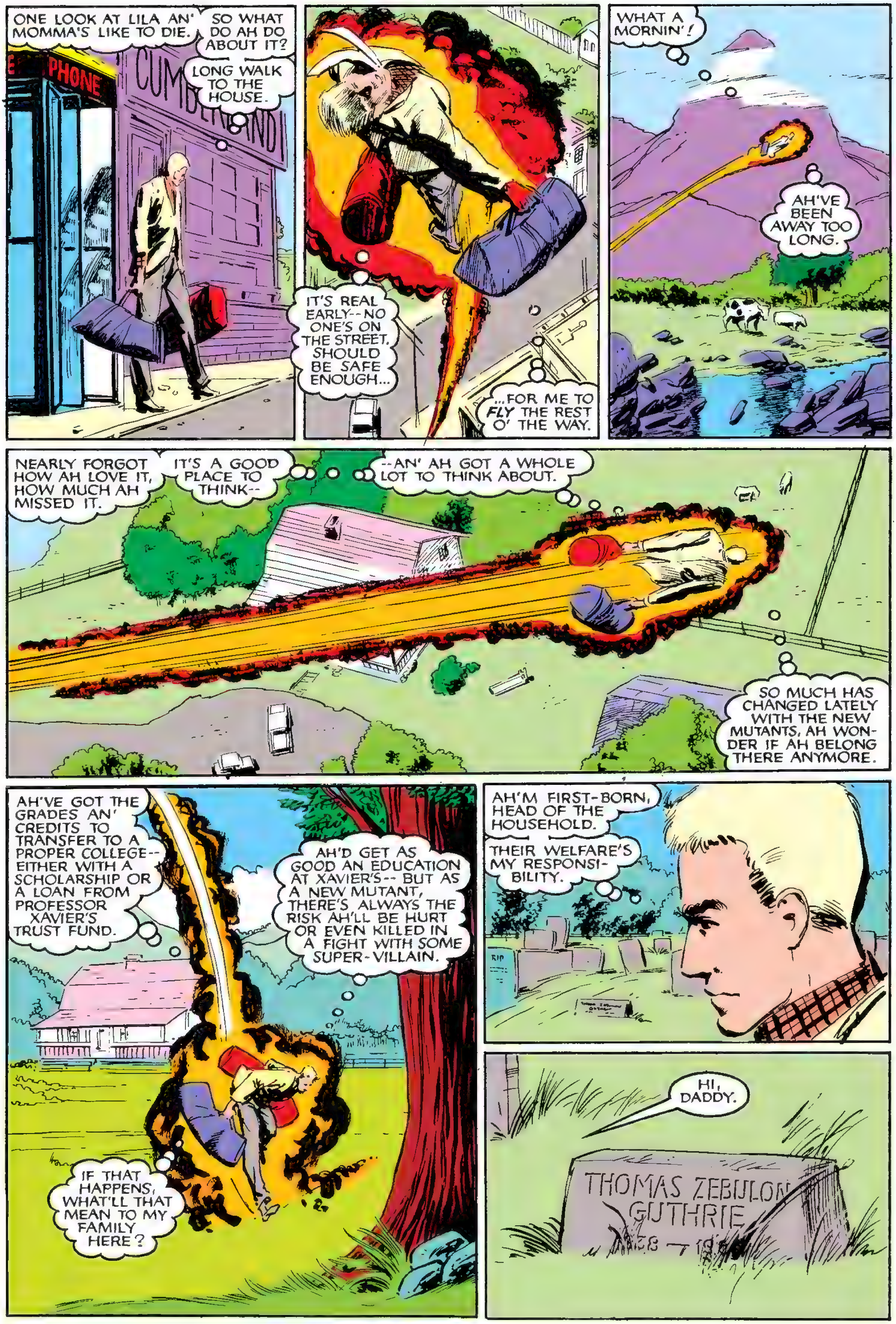

LIKE HIS NAMESAKE, SAM GUTHRIE CAN SMASH THROUGH ANYTHING, AND WHEN HE USES HIS POWER, IT RENDERS HIM VIRTUALLY IMPERVIOUS TO HARM.
NAILED THAT ARMORED SUCKER.
BUT THERE'S A WHOLE LOT MORE TROUBLE WHERE THEY CAME FROM.
Uh-oh.
AIR FORCE ON MY TAIL.
WE'RE RUNNIN' OUT OF TIME.
AND WITHIN THE HUGE, HULKING ALIEN TEMPLE...
...A BAND PLAYS...
...AND LILA CHENEY SINGS--
--OF FEAR AND COURAGE, DANGER AND LOVE.
SUNSPOT! MAGMA!!
THESE CREEPS ARE YOURS!
ROBERTO DaCOSTA IS THE YOUNGEST OF THE TEAM, AND NEARLY THE SMALLEST.
BUT, AS SUNSPOT, HIS SOLAR-CHARGED STRENGTH DEFIES DESCRIPTION.
HE CAN LIFT WHOLE HOUSES.
SO, TOSSING AMARA AQUILLA HIGH INTO THE AIR IS NOTHING.

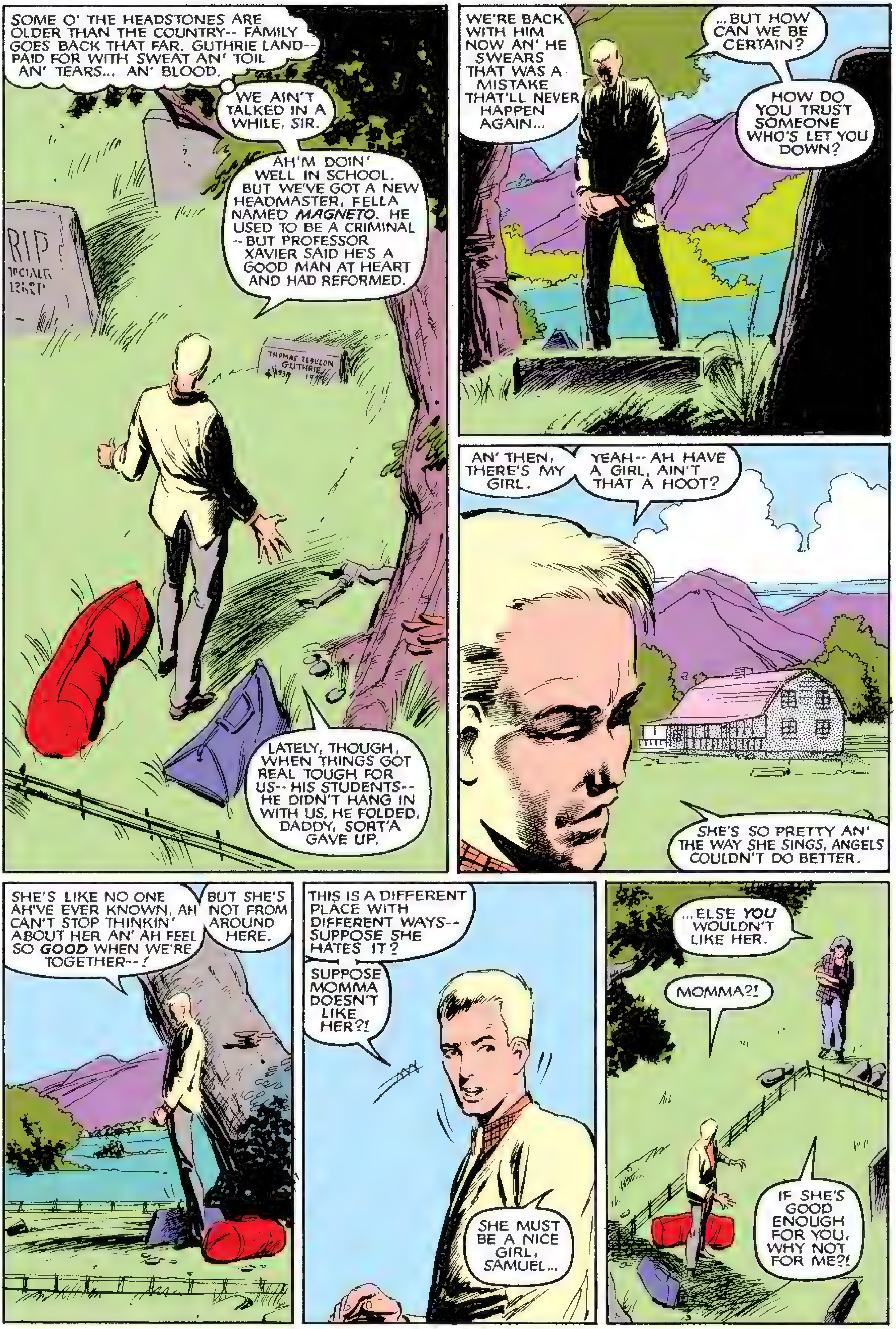

IN MID-AIR, MAGMA UNLEASHES THE RAW POWER OF THE EARTH'S MOLTEN HEART...
...THE FIERY SUBSTANCE OF HER OWN BODY SEARING THROUGH ONE AIRCRAFT...
...WHILE A LAVA BLAST DEALS WITH THE OTHER.
AND THE MUSIC BUILDS...
...STACCATO IMAGES CUTTING FROM BAND TO BATTLE TO BAND...
...MATCHING TEMPOS WITH THE SONG--
--SHOTS OF MUTANTS, LILA, THE BAND...
...AND CHARASULLA, LORD OF THE FREEBOOTING VRAKANIN, MOVING IN FOR THE KILL.
THAT'S THE LAST PLANE.
CUTTING THINGS A TRIFLE CLOSE FOR COMFORT, ARE WE NOT?
HEY, SWEET-HEART, YOU THINK AH'D EVER LET YOU DOWN?
HIS FORCES HAVE BEEN ROUTED.
BUT HE IS DETERMINED...
...THAT LILA WILL NOT LIVE TO ENJOY HER TRIUMPH.
LET'S HIT THE TEMPLE WALL, TEAM--

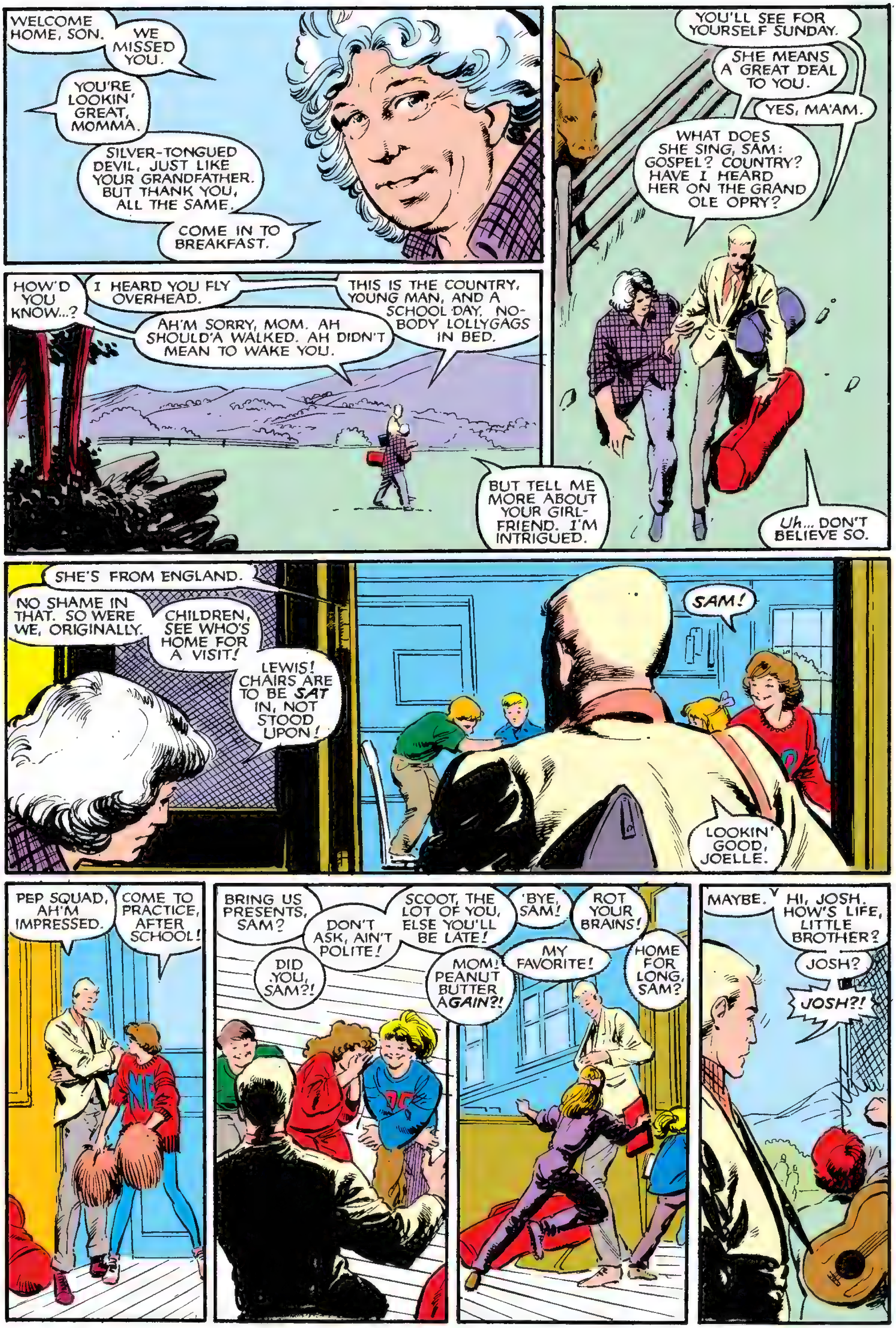

--WITH EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT!!
CRESCENDO--OF SONG AND ACTION--
--AS ANOTHER OF THE MUTANTS, WOLFSBANE, LEAPS THROUGH THE BREACH FOR CHARASULLA.
YOU'RE SAFE!
MY HERO!
SHE'S A WEREWOLF, WITH THREE INCARNATIONS: HUMAN, WOLF...
...AND A TRANSITIONAL WOLFEN FORM THAT COMBINES THE BEST ELEMENTS OF BOTH.
TAKE THAT, Y' SPALEEN!
WOK!
MEANWHILE, THE MUSIC CHANGES DRAMATICALLY...
...SOFTENING ITS HARSH, DRIVING, EMOTIONAL BEAT...
...AS A SONG OF WAR...
...BECOMES ONE OF LOVE.

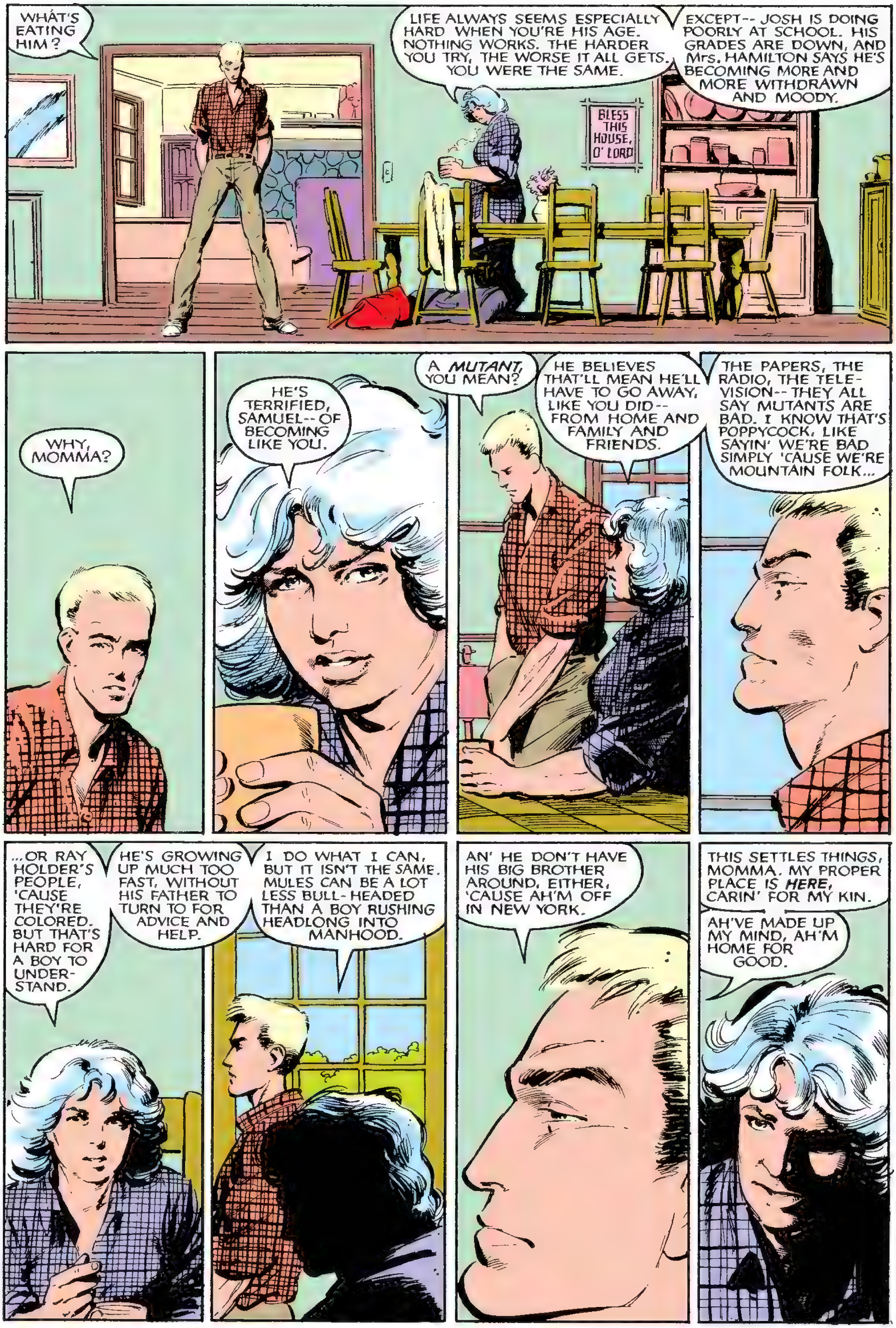

BUT THEN, TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE...
SAMUEL ZACHERY GUTHRIE!?!
Huh? WHO?!
MOMMA?!?
WHO *IS* THIS-- PERSON?!
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*?!
MOMMA, LET ME EXPLAIN--!
Oh, SAMUEL--HOW COULD YOU HAVE *HURT* ME SO?!
SLAM!
SHE LOCKED ME OUT, LILA--!
LILA--?!
SHE'S *GONE!*
WHAT HAVE AH DONE?!
Whua--?!!?
*BUS!*
CALM DOWN, BOY. TAKE IT EASY.
AH'M ON A BUS.
AH-- IT WAS A *DREAM!*
REAL DOOZY, TOO.
PART WAS THAT MUSIC VIDEO CONCEPT LILA WANTS THE MUTANTS TO FILM WITH HER.
AN'... THE REST?
WHAT *WILL* MOMMA THINK OF HER?
CUMBERLAND!
NEXT STOP IS *CUMBERLAND, KENTUCKY!*


HOME.
BEEN A WHILE.
PLACE HASN'T CHANGED MUCH. SURE LOOKS TINY COMPARED TO NEW YORK.
BUT BEAUTIFUL, JUST THE SAME.
POPPA CALLED THESE MOUNTAINS 'GOD'S OWN COUNTRY.' EACH TIME AH SEE 'EM, AH KNOW WHAT HE MEANT.
PHONE
STILL PRETTY COOL HERE, A BITE O' WINTER LEFT IN THE MORNIN' AIR.
BETTER PHONE THE SCHOOL...
TASTE
AND ROUGHLY SEVEN HUNDRED MILES NORTH AND EAST...
...AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S HOME FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
RINNG
BRINNG-KLIK
...MESSAGE AT THE TONE-- *breep!*
IT'S SAM, CALLIN' TO LET Y'ALL KNOW AH'M HOME SAFE...
HE DIALS AGAIN-- A MOBILE NUMBER CURRENTLY SPEEDING NORTH ALONG I-85...
LILA, IT'S SAM.
AH DIDN'T MEAN TO WAKE YOU.
YOU HEAR ANY OBJECTIONS FROM THIS END?
YOU STILL ON FOR SUNDAY DINNER?
Lila Cheney WORLD TOUR '86
WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR THE WORLD-- THOUGH I CONFESS, I'M A BIT NERVOUS.
NEVER BEEN TO MEET A BEAU'S FOLKS BEFORE.
YOU FIGURE THIS MEANS WE'RE SERIOUS?
HEY, SAM, MEET ME IN CHARLOTTE TONIGHT, OKAY?
I'VE A SURPRISE FOR YOU.
'TIL THEN, LUV-- *CIAO!*
'BYE.
OH MAN OH MAN OH MAN--
--WHAT HAVE AH GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?!

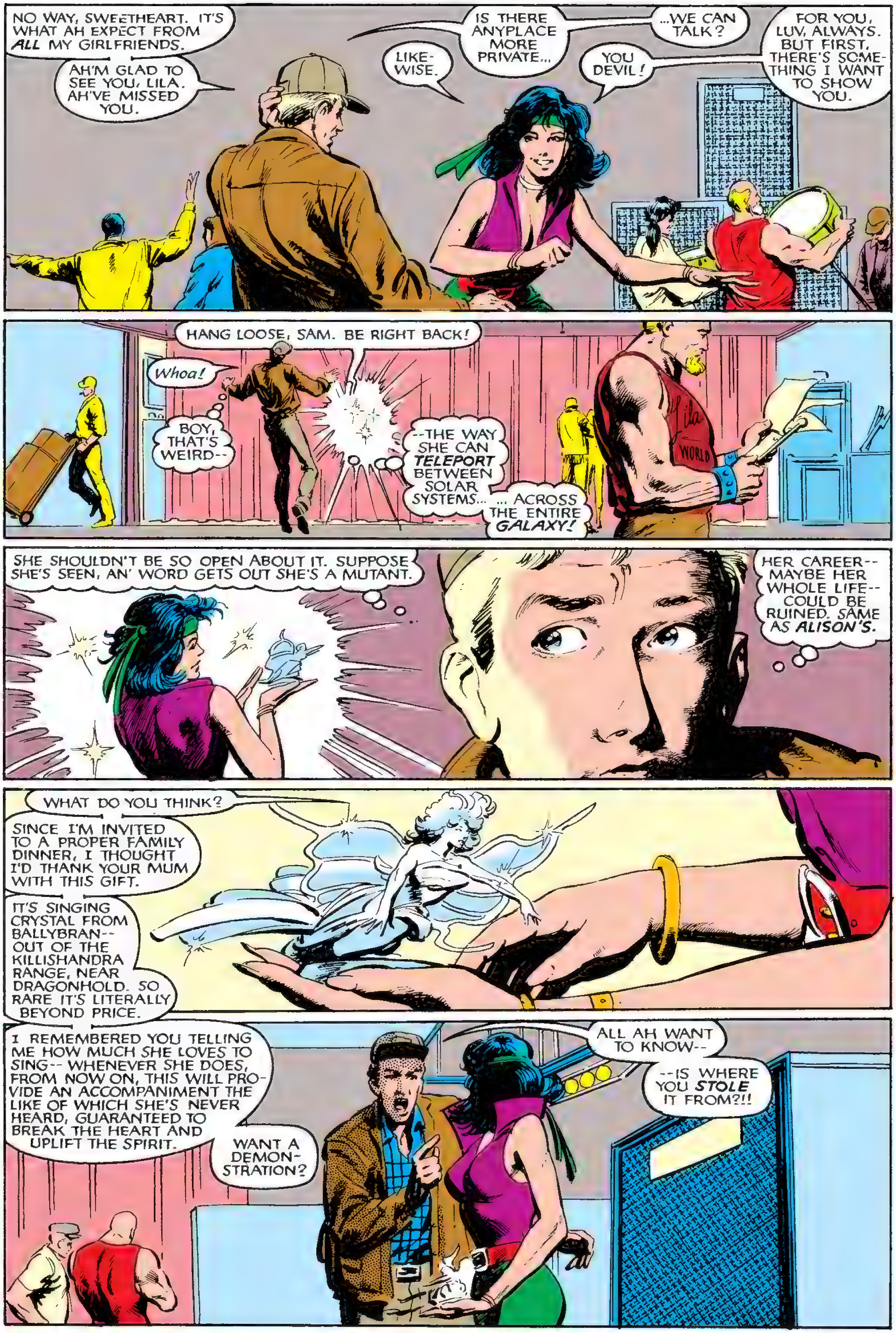

ONE LOOK AT LILA AN' MOMMA'S LIKE TO DIE.
SO WHAT DO AH DO ABOUT IT?
LONG WALK TO THE HOUSE.
PHONE
CUMBERLAND
IT'S REAL EARLY-- NO ONE'S ON THE STREET. SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH...
...FOR ME TO *FLY* THE REST O' THE WAY.
WHAT A MORNIN'!
AH'VE BEEN AWAY TOO LONG.
NEARLY FORGOT HOW AH LOVE IT, HOW MUCH AH MISSED IT.
IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO THINK--
--AN' AH GOT A WHOLE LOT TO THINK ABOUT.
SO MUCH HAS CHANGED LATELY WITH THE NEW MUTANTS, AH WONDER IF AH BELONG THERE ANYMORE.
AH'VE GOT THE GRADES AN' CREDITS TO TRANSFER TO A PROPER COLLEGE-- EITHER WITH A SCHOLARSHIP OR A LOAN FROM PROFESSOR XAVIER'S TRUST FUND.
AH'D GET AS GOOD AN EDUCATION AT XAVIER'S-- BUT AS A NEW MUTANT, THERE'S ALWAYS THE RISK AH'LL BE HURT OR EVEN KILLED IN A FIGHT WITH SOME SUPER-VILLAIN.
IF THAT HAPPENS, WHAT'LL THAT MEAN TO MY FAMILY HERE?
AH'M FIRST-BORN, HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD.
THEIR WELFARE'S MY RESPONSIBILITY.
RIP
HI, DADDY.
THOMAS ZEBULON GUTHRIE

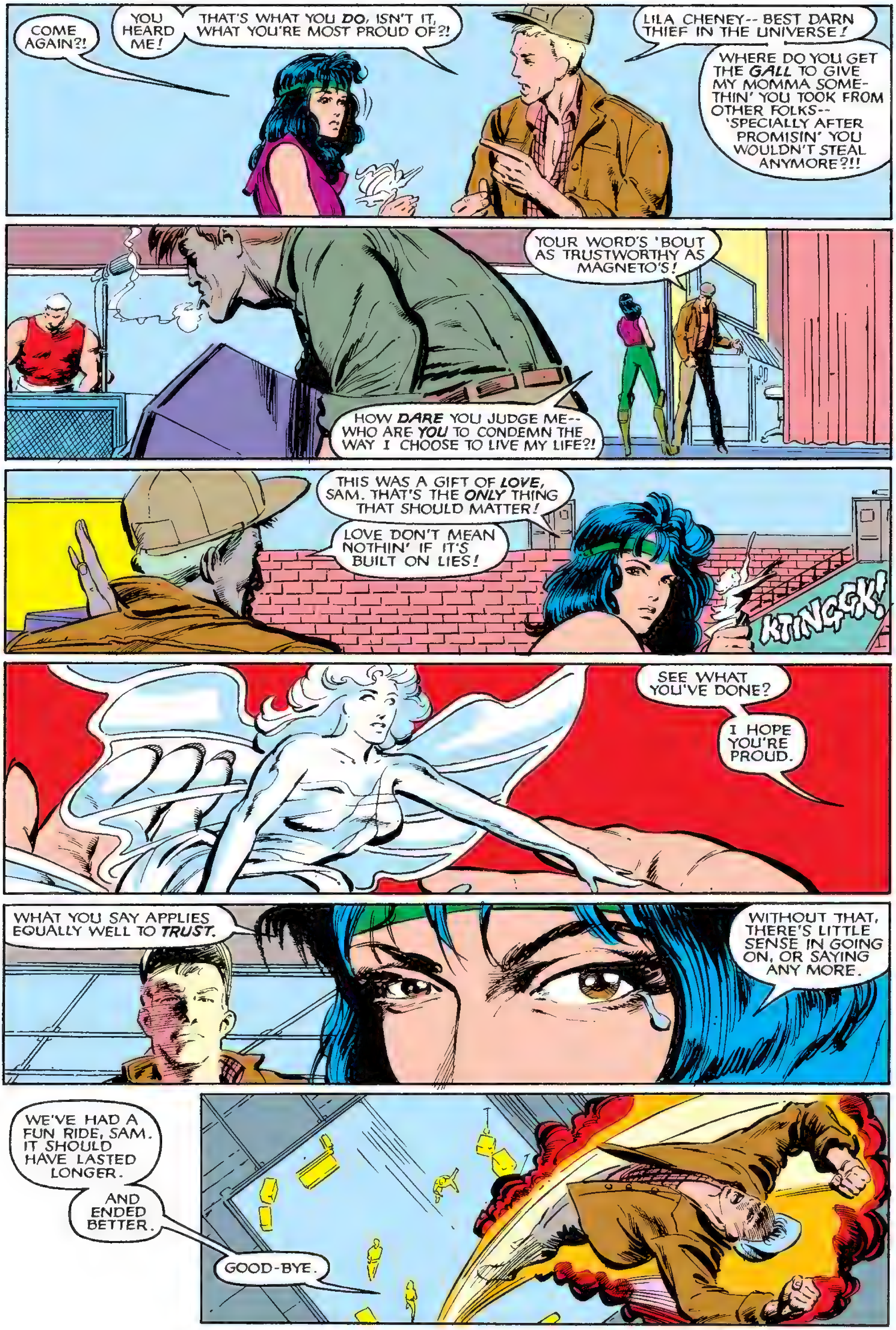

SOME O' THE HEADSTONES ARE OLDER THAN THE COUNTRY-- FAMILY GOES BACK THAT FAR. GUTHRIE LAND-- PAID FOR WITH SWEAT AN' TOIL AN' TEARS... AN' BLOOD.
WE AIN'T TALKED IN A WHILE, SIR.
AH'M DOIN' WELL IN SCHOOL. BUT WE'VE GOT A NEW HEADMASTER, FELLA NAMED *MAGNETO*. HE USED TO BE A CRIMINAL --BUT PROFESSOR XAVIER SAID HE'S A GOOD MAN AT HEART AND HAD REFORMED.
RIP
THOMAS ZEBULON GUTHRIE
LATELY, THOUGH, WHEN THINGS GOT REAL TOUGH FOR US-- HIS STUDENTS-- HE DIDN'T HANG IN WITH US. HE FOLDED, DADDY, SORT'A GAVE UP.
WE'RE BACK WITH HIM NOW AN' HE SWEARS THAT WAS A MISTAKE THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN...
...BUT HOW CAN WE BE CERTAIN?
HOW DO YOU TRUST SOMEONE WHO'S LET YOU DOWN?
AN' THEN, THERE'S MY GIRL.
YEAH-- AH HAVE A GIRL, AIN'T THAT A HOOT?
SHE'S SO PRETTY AN' THE WAY SHE *SINGS*, ANGELS COULDN'T DO BETTER.
SHE'S LIKE NO ONE AH'VE EVER KNOWN. AH CAN'T STOP THINKIN' ABOUT HER AN' AH FEEL SO *GOOD* WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER--!
BUT SHE'S NOT FROM AROUND HERE.
THIS IS A DIFFERENT PLACE WITH DIFFERENT WAYS-- SUPPOSE SHE HATES IT?
SUPPOSE MOMMA DOESN'T LIKE HER?!
SHE MUST BE A NICE GIRL, SAMUEL...
...ELSE *YOU* WOULDN'T LIKE HER.
MOMMA?!
IF SHE'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, WHY NOT FOR ME?!

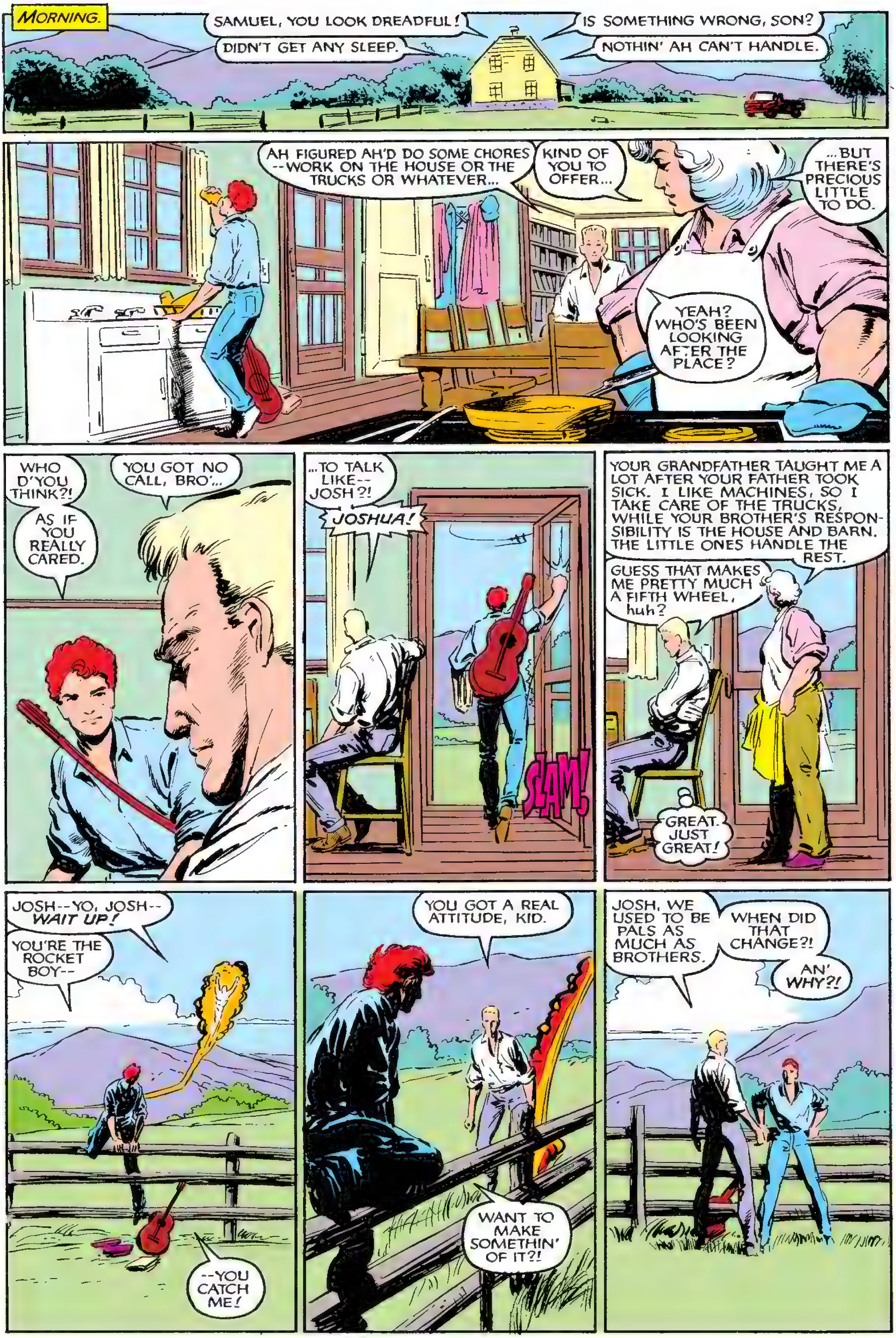

WELCOME HOME, SON.
WE MISSED YOU.
YOU'RE LOOKIN' GREAT, MOMMA.
SILVER-TONGUED DEVIL, JUST LIKE YOUR GRANDFATHER. BUT THANK YOU, ALL THE SAME.
COME IN TO BREAKFAST.
HOW'D YOU KNOW...?
I HEARD YOU FLY OVERHEAD.
AH'M SORRY, MOM. AH SHOULD'A WALKED. AH DIDN'T MEAN TO WAKE YOU.
THIS IS THE COUNTRY, YOUNG MAN, AND A SCHOOL DAY. NOBODY LOLLYGAGS IN BED.
BUT TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND. *I'M* INTRIGUED.
YOU'LL SEE FOR YOURSELF SUNDAY.
SHE MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO YOU.
YES, MA'AM.
WHAT DOES SHE SING, SAM: GOSPEL? COUNTRY? HAVE *I* HEARD HER ON THE GRAND OLE OPRY?
*Uh...* DON'T BELIEVE SO.
SHE'S FROM ENGLAND.
NO SHAME IN THAT. SO WERE WE, ORIGINALLY.
CHILDREN, SEE WHO'S HOME FOR A VISIT!
LEWIS! CHAIRS ARE TO BE ***SAT*** IN, NOT STOOD UPON!
*SAM!*
LOOKIN' GOOD, JOELLE.
PEP SQUAD, AH'M IMPRESSED.
COME TO PRACTICE, AFTER SCHOOL!
BRING US PRESENTS, SAM?
DON'T ASK, AIN'T POLITE!
DID YOU, SAM?!
SCOOT, THE LOT OF YOU, ELSE YOU'LL BE LATE!
'BYE, SAM!
ROT YOUR BRAINS!
MOM! PEANUT BUTTER A*GAIN*?!
MY FAVORITE!
HOME FOR LONG, SAM?
MAYBE.
HI, JOSH. HOW'S LIFE, LITTLE BROTHER?
JOSH?
*JOSH?!*

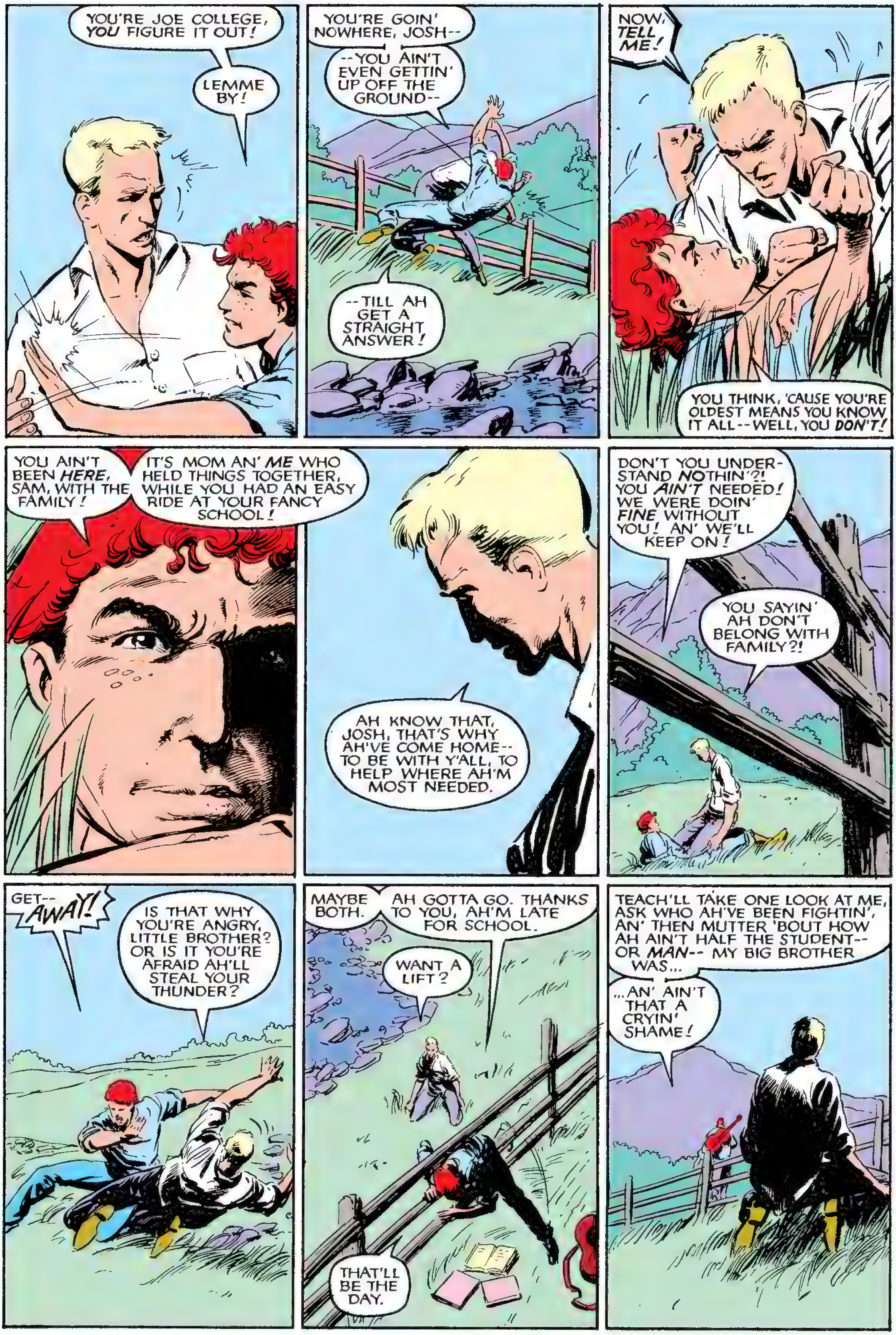

WHAT'S EATING HIM?
LIFE ALWAYS SEEMS ESPECIALLY HARD WHEN YOU'RE HIS AGE. NOTHING WORKS. THE HARDER YOU TRY, THE WORSE IT ALL GETS. YOU WERE THE SAME.
EXCEPT-- JOSH IS DOING POORLY AT SCHOOL. HIS GRADES ARE DOWN, AND Mrs. HAMILTON SAYS HE'S BECOMING MORE AND MORE WITHDRAWN AND MOODY.
BLESS THIS HOUSE, O' LORD
WHY, MOMMA?
HE'S TERRIFIED, SAMUEL-- OF BECOMING LIKE YOU.
A *MUTANT,* YOU MEAN?
HE BELIEVES THAT'LL MEAN HE'LL HAVE TO GO AWAY, LIKE YOU DID-- FROM HOME AND FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
THE PAPERS, THE RADIO, THE TELEVISION-- THEY ALL SAY MUTANTS ARE BAD. I KNOW THAT'S POPPYCOCK. LIKE SAYIN' WE'RE BAD SIMPLY 'CAUSE WE'RE MOUNTAIN FOLK...
...OR RAY HOLDER'S PEOPLE, 'CAUSE THEY'RE COLORED. BUT THAT'S HARD FOR A BOY TO UNDERSTAND.
HE'S GROWING UP MUCH TOO FAST, WITHOUT HIS FATHER TO TURN TO FOR ADVICE AND HELP.
I DO WHAT I CAN, BUT IT ISN'T THE *SAME.* MULES CAN BE A LOT LESS BULL-HEADED THAN A BOY RUSHING HEADLONG INTO MANHOOD.
AN' HE DON'T HAVE HIS BIG BROTHER AROUND, EITHER, 'CAUSE AH'M OFF IN NEW YORK.
THIS SETTLES THINGS, MOMMA. MY PROPER PLACE IS *HERE,* CARIN' FOR MY KIN.
AH'VE MADE UP MY MIND. AH'M HOME FOR GOOD.

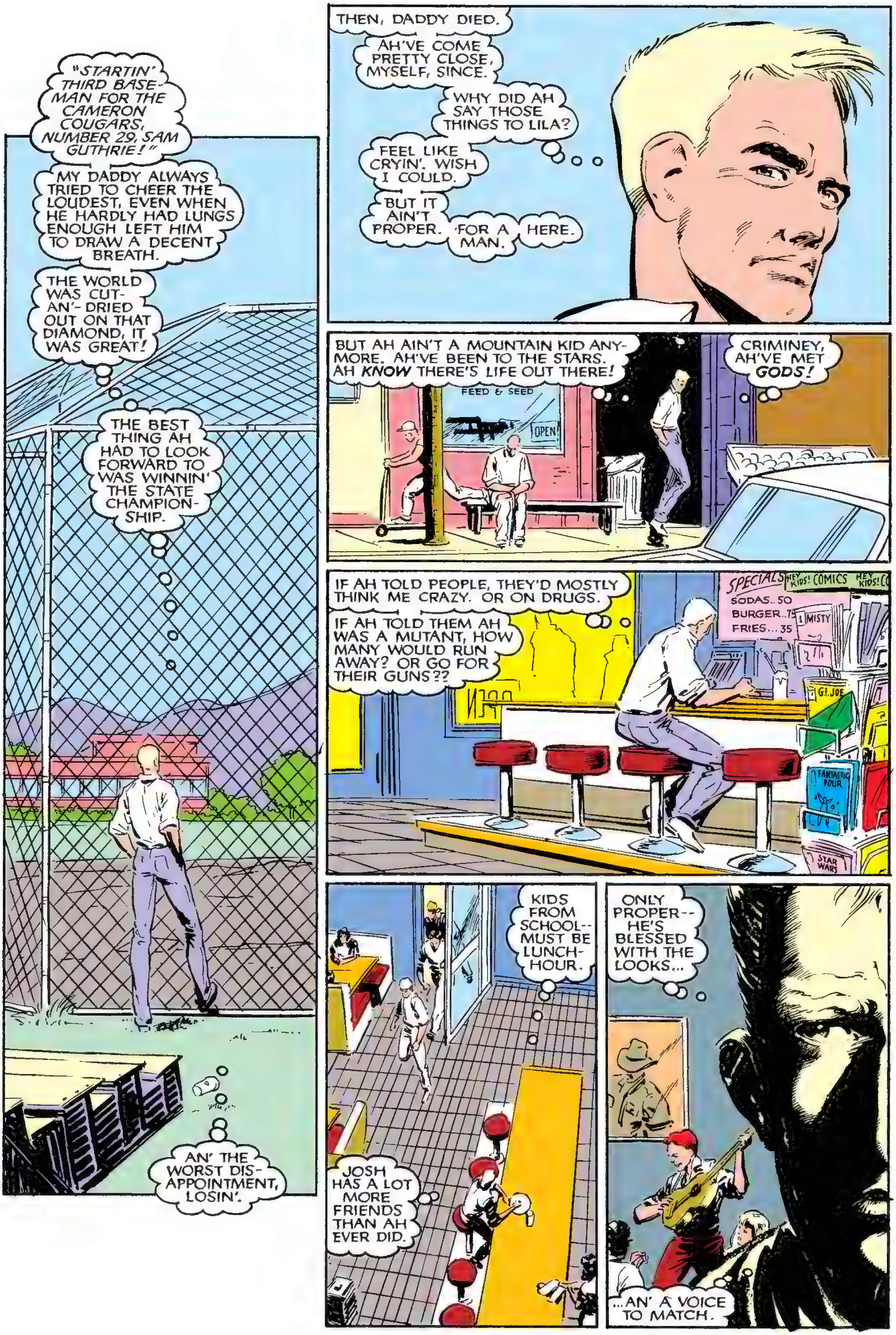
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA.
THERE'S THE COLISEUM.
CONCERT'S JUST LETTIN' OUT.
WISH AH COULD'A SEEN IT.
HECK-- AH WISH AH COULD SEE 'EM ALL!
CREW'S LOADING LILA'S GEAR FOR THE NEXT GIG.
4
WHAT A LIFE-- GYPSIES HAVE IT EASIER.
AH DUNNO IF AH COULD HACK THAT KIND'A WANDERING.
NO ROOTS, NEVER A PLACE TO CALL HOME.
BUT LILA LOVES IT.
HI, SAM! LONG TIME, NO SEE!
*ALISON!* YOU CHANGED YOUR HAIR!
I'M IN DISGUISE.
LOOKIN' GOOD.
STILL *DAZZLIN'* THE AUDIENCES?
WHENEVER LILA LETS ME.
AH'M GLAD THINGS ARE TURNIN' OUT OKAY FOR ALI. AS *DAZZLER,* SHE'D FALLEN ON SOME PRETTY ROUGH TIMES, TILL LILA BROUGHT HER INTO THE BAND.
NOW, HER MUTANT POWERS PROVIDE THE SHOW'S LIGHTING EFFECTS.
AH REALLY HOPE, THOUGH, THAT SOMEDAY SHE'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE IT ON HER OWN.
STILL DRINKIN' IN THE APPLAUSE, LILA?
YOU BETCHA--
SAM
WOW!
TOOK MY BREATH AWAY, THAT DID.
MINE, TOO.
DIDN'T MEAN TO GET SO CARRIED AWAY. HOPE YOU WON'T TAKE IT, ah, PERSONALLY.

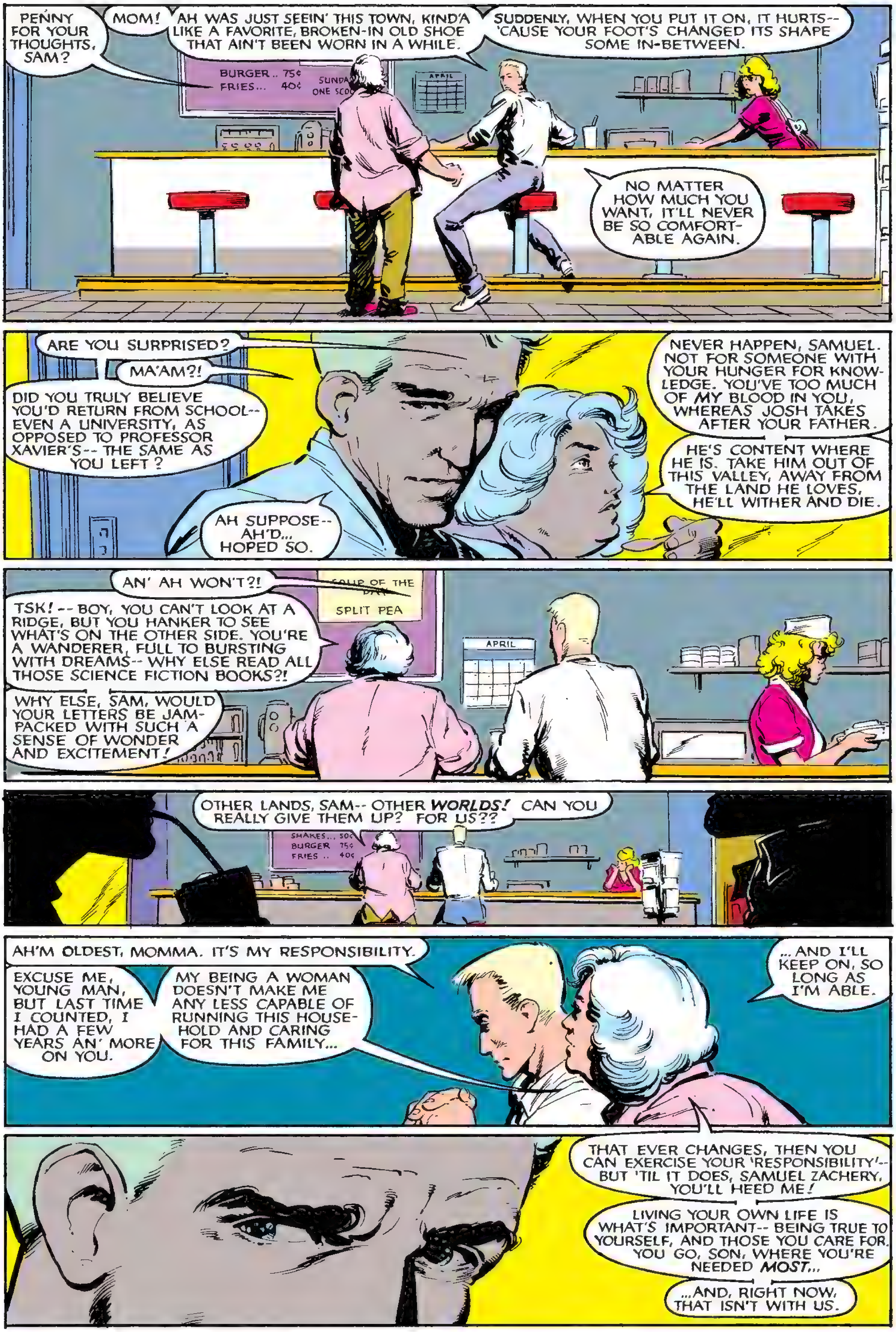

NO WAY, SWEETHEART. IT'S WHAT AH EXPECT FROM *ALL* MY GIRLFRIENDS.
AH'M GLAD TO SEE YOU, LILA. AH'VE MISSED YOU.
LIKE-WISE.
IS THERE ANYPLACE MORE PRIVATE...
...WE CAN TALK?
YOU DEVIL!
FOR YOU, LUV, ALWAYS. BUT FIRST, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU.
HANG LOOSE, SAM. BE RIGHT BACK!
Whoa!
BOY, THAT'S WEIRD--
--THE WAY SHE CAN *TELEPORT* BETWEEN SOLAR SYSTEMS...
...ACROSS THE ENTIRE *GALAXY!*
Lila
WORLD
SHE SHOULDN'T BE SO OPEN ABOUT IT. SUPPOSE SHE'S SEEN, AN' WORD GETS OUT SHE'S A MUTANT.
HER CAREER--MAYBE HER WHOLE LIFE--COULD BE RUINED. SAME AS *ALISON'S.*
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
SINCE I'M INVITED TO A PROPER FAMILY DINNER, I THOUGHT I'D THANK YOUR MUM WITH THIS GIFT.
IT'S SINGING CRYSTAL FROM BALLYBRAN--OUT OF THE KILLISHANDRA RANGE, NEAR DRAGONHOLD. SO RARE IT'S LITERALLY BEYOND PRICE.
I REMEMBERED YOU TELLING ME HOW MUCH SHE LOVES TO SING--WHENEVER SHE DOES, FROM NOW ON, THIS WILL PROVIDE AN ACCOMPANIMENT THE LIKE OF WHICH SHE'S NEVER HEARD, GUARANTEED TO BREAK THE HEART AND UPLIFT THE SPIRIT.
WANT A DEMONSTRATION?
ALL AH WANT TO KNOW--
--IS WHERE YOU *STOLE* IT FROM?!!

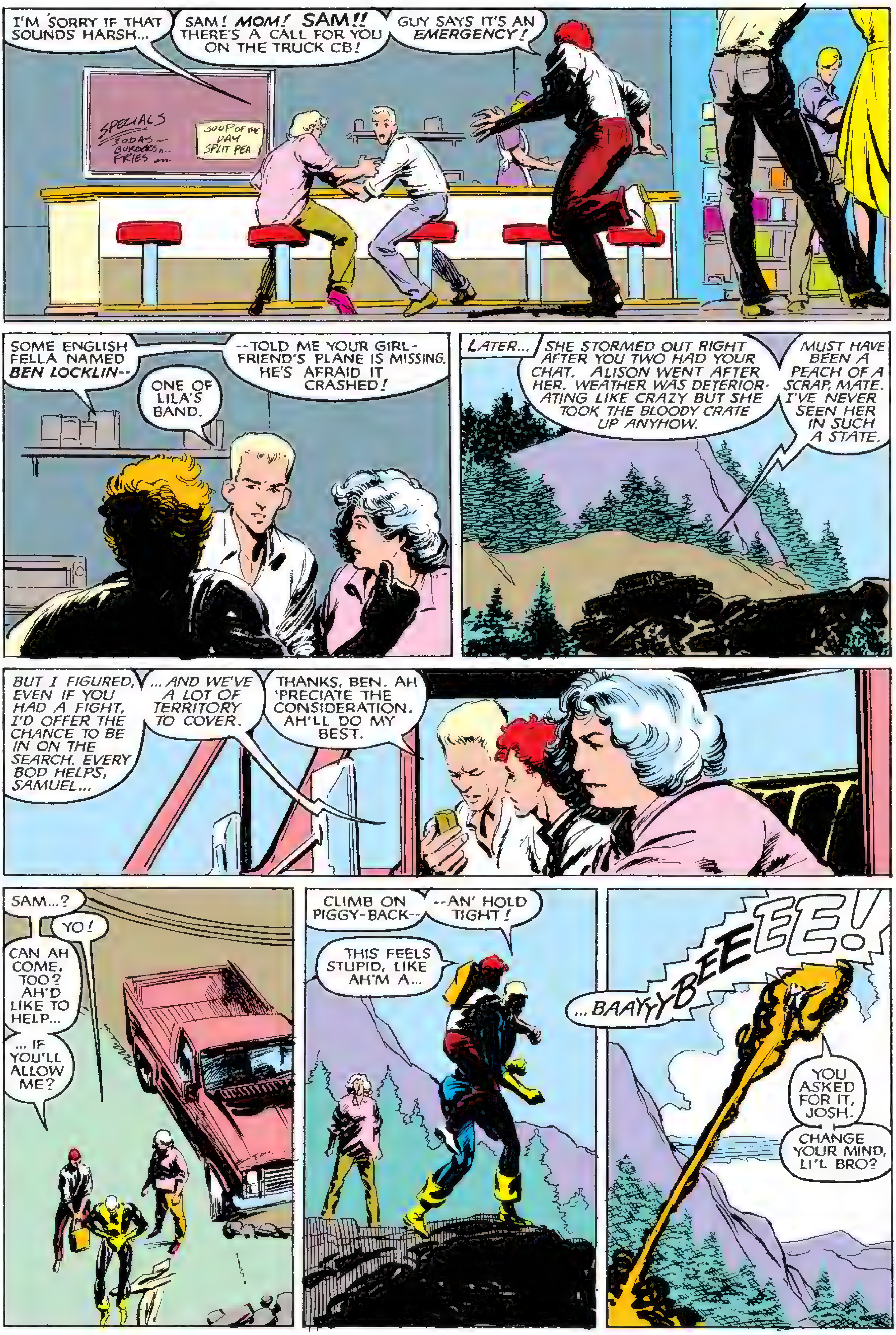

COME AGAIN?!
YOU HEARD ME!
THAT'S WHAT YOU *DO*, ISN'T IT, WHAT YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF?!
LILA CHENEY-- BEST DARN THIEF IN THE UNIVERSE!
WHERE DO YOU GET THE *GALL* TO GIVE MY MOMMA SOMETHIN' YOU TOOK FROM OTHER FOLKS-- 'SPECIALLY AFTER PROMISIN' YOU WOULDN'T STEAL ANYMORE?!!
YOUR WORD'S 'BOUT AS TRUSTWORTHY AS MAGNETO'S!
HOW *DARE* YOU JUDGE ME-- WHO ARE *YOU* TO CONDEMN THE WAY I CHOOSE TO LIVE MY LIFE?!
THIS WAS A GIFT OF *LOVE*, SAM. THAT'S THE *ONLY* THING THAT SHOULD MATTER!
LOVE DON'T MEAN NOTHIN' IF IT'S BUILT ON LIES!
KTINGGK!
SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?
I HOPE YOU'RE PROUD.
WHAT YOU SAY APPLIES EQUALLY WELL TO *TRUST*.
WITHOUT THAT, THERE'S LITTLE SENSE IN GOING ON, OR SAYING ANY MORE.
WE'VE HAD A FUN RIDE, SAM. IT SHOULD HAVE LASTED LONGER.
AND ENDED BETTER.
GOOD-BYE.


MORNING.
SAMUEL, YOU LOOK DREADFUL!
DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP.
IS SOMETHING WRONG, SON?
NOTHIN' AH CAN'T HANDLE.
AH FIGURED AH'D DO SOME CHORES --WORK ON THE HOUSE OR THE TRUCKS OR WHATEVER...
KIND OF YOU TO OFFER...
...BUT THERE'S PRECIOUS LITTLE TO DO.
YEAH? WHO'S BEEN LOOKING AFTER THE PLACE?
WHO D'YOU THINK?!
AS IF YOU REALLY CARED.
YOU GOT NO CALL, BRO'...
...TO TALK LIKE-- JOSH?!
JOSHUA!
SLAM!
YOUR GRANDFATHER TAUGHT ME A LOT AFTER YOUR FATHER TOOK SICK. I LIKE MACHINES, SO I TAKE CARE OF THE TRUCKS, WHILE YOUR BROTHER'S RESPONSIBILITY IS THE HOUSE AND BARN. THE LITTLE ONES HANDLE THE REST.
GUESS THAT MAKES ME PRETTY MUCH A FIFTH WHEEL, huh?
GREAT. JUST GREAT!
JOSH--YO, JOSH-- WAIT UP!
YOU'RE THE ROCKET BOY--
--YOU CATCH ME!
YOU GOT A REAL ATTITUDE, KID.
WANT TO MAKE SOMETHIN' OF IT?!
JOSH, WE USED TO BE PALS AS MUCH AS BROTHERS.
WHEN DID THAT CHANGE?!
AN' WHY?!


YOU'RE JOE COLLEGE, *YOU* FIGURE IT OUT!
LEMME BY!
YOU'RE GOIN' NOWHERE, JOSH--
--YOU AIN'T EVEN GETTIN' UP OFF THE GROUND--
--TILL AH GET A STRAIGHT ANSWER!
NOW, *TELL ME!*
YOU THINK, 'CAUSE YOU'RE OLDEST MEANS YOU KNOW IT ALL--WELL, YOU *DON'T!*
YOU AIN'T BEEN *HERE*, SAM, WITH THE FAMILY!
IT'S MOM AN' *ME* WHO HELD THINGS TOGETHER, WHILE YOU HAD AN EASY RIDE AT YOUR FANCY SCHOOL!
AH KNOW THAT, JOSH, THAT'S WHY AH'VE COME HOME--TO BE WITH Y'ALL, TO HELP WHERE AH'M MOST NEEDED.
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND *NO*THIN'?! YOU *AIN'T* NEEDED! WE WERE DOIN' *FINE* WITHOUT YOU! AN' WE'LL KEEP ON!
YOU SAYIN' AH DON'T BELONG WITH FAMILY?!
GET-- *AWAY!*
IS THAT WHY YOU'RE ANGRY, LITTLE BROTHER? OR IS IT YOU'RE AFRAID AH'LL STEAL YOUR THUNDER?
MAYBE BOTH.
AH GOTTA GO. THANKS TO YOU, AH'M LATE FOR SCHOOL.
WANT A LIFT?
THAT'LL BE THE DAY.
TEACH'LL TAKE ONE LOOK AT ME, ASK WHO AH'VE BEEN FIGHTIN', AN' THEN MUTTER 'BOUT HOW AH AIN'T HALF THE STUDENT-- OR *MAN*-- MY BIG BROTHER WAS...
...AN' AIN'T THAT A CRYIN' SHAME!


"STARTIN' THIRD BASEMAN FOR THE CAMERON COUGARS, NUMBER 29, SAM GUTHRIE!"
MY DADDY ALWAYS TRIED TO CHEER THE LOUDEST, EVEN WHEN HE HARDLY HAD LUNGS ENOUGH LEFT HIM TO DRAW A DECENT BREATH.
THE WORLD WAS CUT-AN'-DRIED OUT ON THAT DIAMOND, IT WAS GREAT!
THE BEST THING AH HAD TO LOOK FORWARD TO WAS WINNIN' THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP.
AN' THE WORST DISAPPOINTMENT, LOSIN'.
THEN, DADDY DIED.
AH'VE COME PRETTY CLOSE, MYSELF, SINCE.
WHY DID AH SAY THOSE THINGS TO LILA?
FEEL LIKE CRYIN'. WISH I COULD.
BUT IT AIN'T PROPER.
FOR A MAN.
HERE.
BUT AH AIN'T A MOUNTAIN KID ANYMORE. AH'VE BEEN TO THE STARS. AH *KNOW* THERE'S LIFE OUT THERE!
FEED & SEED
OPEN
CRIMINEY, AH'VE MET *GODS!*
IF AH TOLD PEOPLE, THEY'D MOSTLY THINK ME CRAZY. OR ON DRUGS.
IF AH TOLD THEM AH WAS A MUTANT, HOW MANY WOULD RUN AWAY? OR GO FOR THEIR GUNS??
SPECIALS
SODAS.. 50
BURGER.. 75
FRIES... 35
HEY KIDS! COMICS
MISTY
G.I. JOE
FANTASTIC FOUR
STAR WARS
KIDS FROM SCHOOL--MUST BE LUNCH-HOUR.
JOSH HAS A LOT MORE FRIENDS THAN AH EVER DID.
ONLY PROPER--HE'S BLESSED WITH THE LOOKS...
...AN' A VOICE TO MATCH.


PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS, SAM?
MOM!
AH WAS JUST SEEIN' THIS TOWN, KIND'A LIKE A FAVORITE, BROKEN-IN OLD SHOE THAT AIN'T BEEN WORN IN A WHILE.
SUDDENLY, WHEN YOU PUT IT ON, IT HURTS-- 'CAUSE YOUR FOOT'S CHANGED ITS SHAPE SOME IN-BETWEEN.
BURGER .. 75¢
FRIES ... 40¢
APRIL
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU WANT, IT'LL NEVER BE SO COMFORTABLE AGAIN.
ARE YOU SURPRISED?
MA'AM?!
DID YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU'D RETURN FROM SCHOOL-- EVEN A UNIVERSITY, AS OPPOSED TO PROFESSOR XAVIER'S-- THE SAME AS YOU LEFT?
AH SUPPOSE-- AH'D... HOPED SO.
NEVER HAPPEN, SAMUEL. NOT FOR SOMEONE WITH YOUR HUNGER FOR KNOWLEDGE. YOU'VE TOO MUCH OF *MY* BLOOD IN YOU, WHEREAS JOSH TAKES AFTER YOUR FATHER.
HE'S CONTENT WHERE HE IS. TAKE HIM OUT OF THIS VALLEY, AWAY FROM THE LAND HE LOVES, HE'LL WITHER AND DIE.
AN' AH WON'T?!
SOUP OF THE DAY
SPLIT PEA
TSK! -- BOY, YOU CAN'T LOOK AT A RIDGE, BUT YOU HANKER TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE. YOU'RE A WANDERER, FULL TO BURSTING WITH DREAMS-- WHY ELSE READ ALL THOSE SCIENCE FICTION BOOKS?!
WHY ELSE, SAM, WOULD YOUR LETTERS BE JAM-PACKED WITH SUCH A SENSE OF WONDER AND EXCITEMENT!
APRIL
OTHER LANDS, SAM-- OTHER *WORLDS!* CAN YOU REALLY GIVE THEM UP? FOR US??
SHAKES... 50¢
BURGER 75¢
FRIES .. 40¢
AH'M OLDEST, MOMMA. IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY.
EXCUSE ME, YOUNG MAN, BUT LAST TIME I COUNTED, I HAD A FEW YEARS AN' MORE ON YOU.
MY BEING A WOMAN DOESN'T MAKE ME ANY LESS CAPABLE OF RUNNING THIS HOUSEHOLD AND CARING FOR THIS FAMILY...
... AND I'LL KEEP ON, SO LONG AS I'M ABLE.
THAT EVER CHANGES, THEN YOU CAN EXERCISE YOUR 'RESPONSIBILITY'-- BUT 'TIL IT DOES, SAMUEL ZACHERY, YOU'LL HEED ME!
LIVING YOUR OWN LIFE IS WHAT'S IMPORTANT-- BEING TRUE TO YOURSELF, AND THOSE YOU CARE FOR. YOU GO, SON, WHERE YOU'RE NEEDED *MOST*...
... AND, RIGHT NOW, THAT ISN'T WITH US.


I'M SORRY IF THAT SOUNDS HARSH...
SAM! MOM! SAM!! THERE'S A CALL FOR YOU ON THE TRUCK CB!
GUY SAYS IT'S AN EMERGENCY!
SPECIALS SODAS ~ BURGERS n... FRIES ...
SOUP OF THE DAY SPLIT PEA
SOME ENGLISH FELLA NAMED BEN LOCKLIN--
--TOLD ME YOUR GIRL-FRIEND'S PLANE IS MISSING. HE'S AFRAID IT CRASHED!
ONE OF LILA'S BAND.
LATER...
SHE STORMED OUT RIGHT AFTER YOU TWO HAD YOUR CHAT. ALISON WENT AFTER HER. WEATHER WAS DETERIORATING LIKE CRAZY BUT SHE TOOK THE BLOODY CRATE UP ANYHOW.
MUST HAVE BEEN A PEACH OF A SCRAP, MATE. I'VE NEVER SEEN HER IN SUCH A STATE.
BUT I FIGURED, EVEN IF YOU HAD A FIGHT, I'D OFFER THE CHANCE TO BE IN ON THE SEARCH. EVERY BOD HELPS, SAMUEL...
...AND WE'VE A LOT OF TERRITORY TO COVER.
THANKS, BEN. AH 'PRECIATE THE CONSIDERATION. AH'LL DO MY BEST.
SAM...?
YO!
CAN AH COME, TOO? AH'D LIKE TO HELP...
... IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME?
CLIMB ON PIGGY-BACK--
--AN' HOLD TIGHT!
THIS FEELS STUPID, LIKE AH'M A...
...BAAYYYBEEEEE!
YOU ASKED FOR IT, JOSH.
CHANGE YOUR MIND, LI'L BRO?
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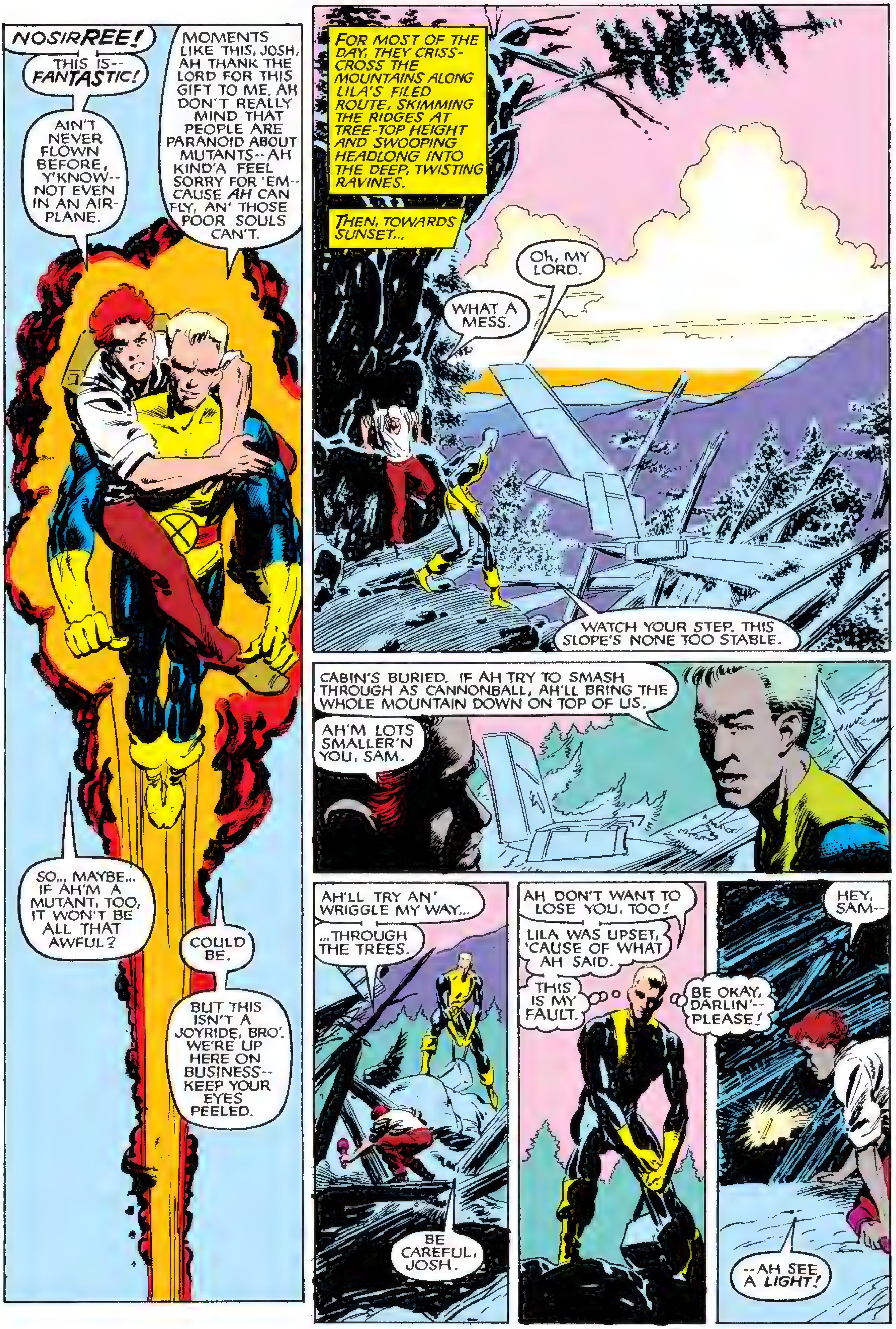
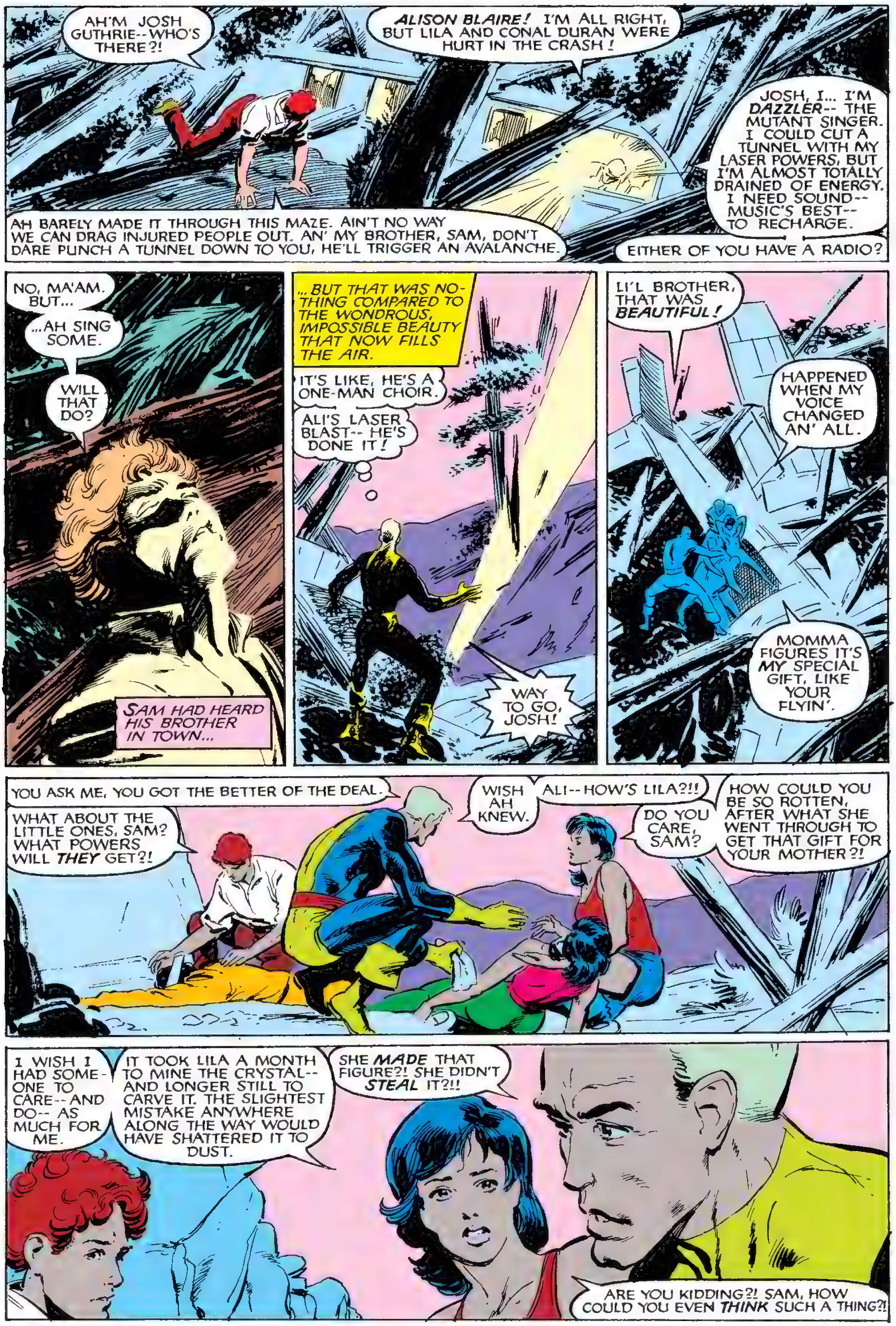
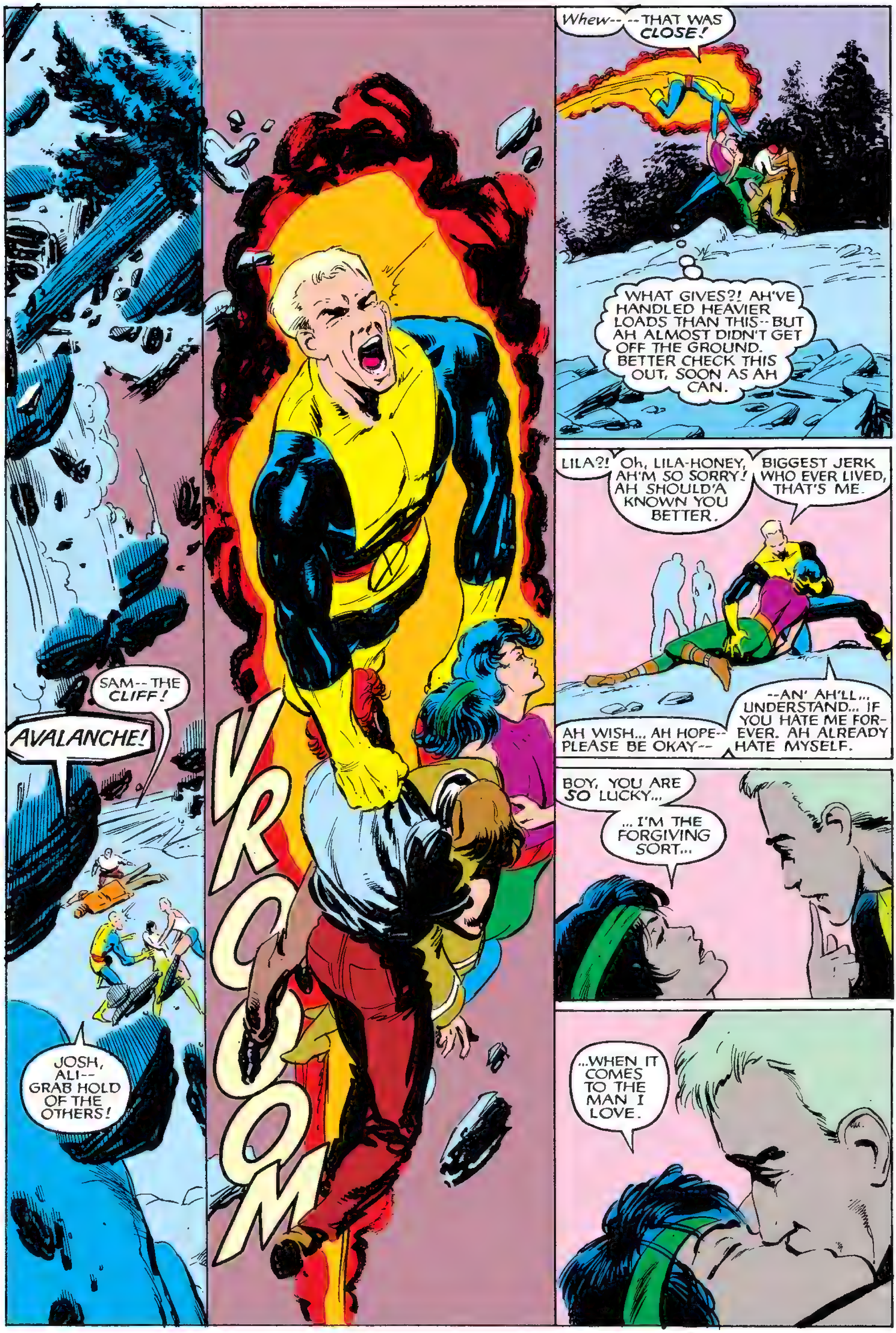
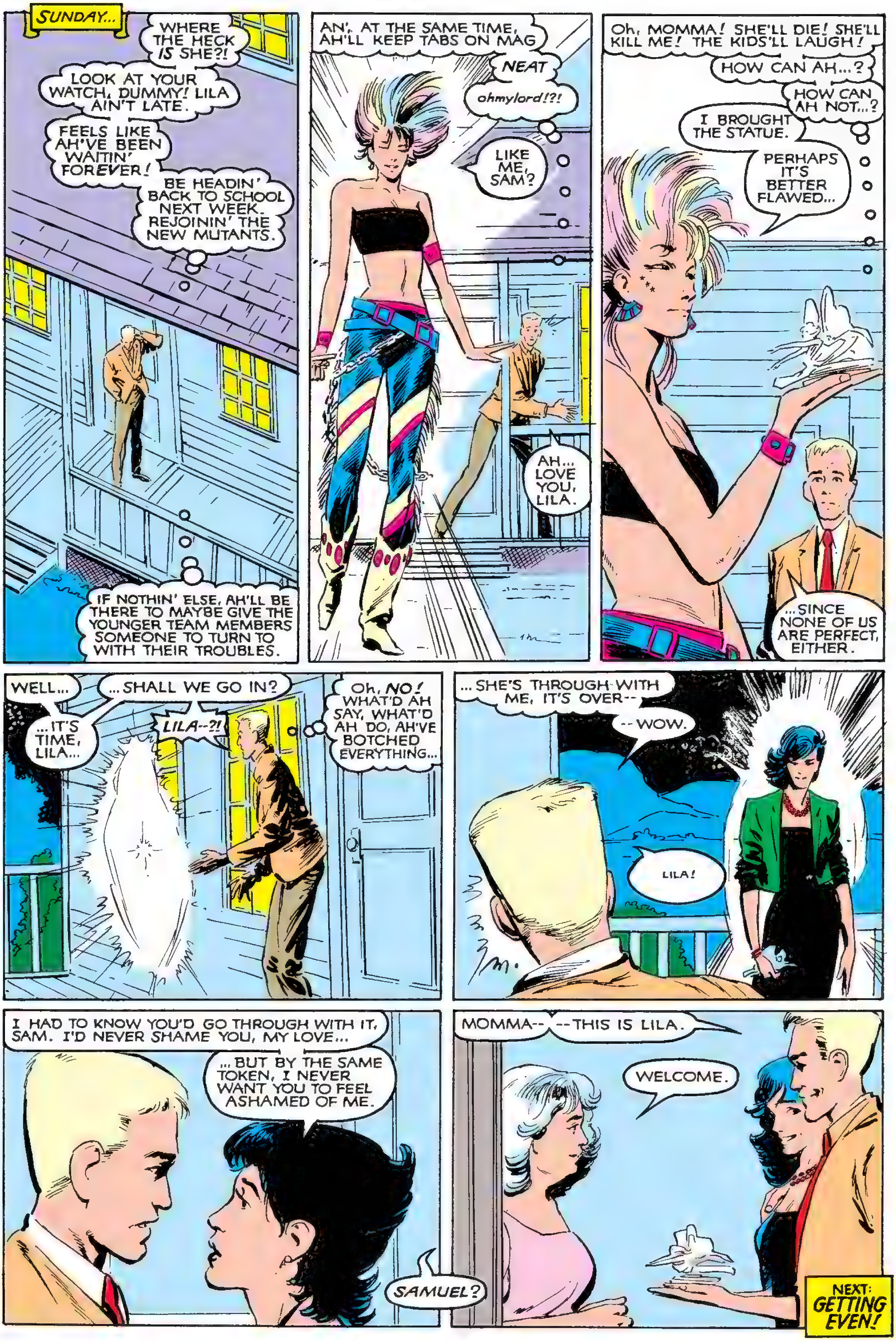

NOSIRREE!
THIS IS-- FANTASTIC!
AIN'T NEVER FLOWN BEFORE, Y'KNOW-- NOT EVEN IN AN AIRPLANE.
MOMENTS LIKE THIS, JOSH, AH THANK THE LORD FOR THIS GIFT TO ME. AH DON'T REALLY MIND THAT PEOPLE ARE PARANOID ABOUT MUTANTS--AH KIND'A FEEL SORRY FOR 'EM--CAUSE AH CAN FLY, AN' THOSE POOR SOULS CAN'T.
SO... MAYBE... IF AH'M A MUTANT, TOO, IT WON'T BE ALL THAT AWFUL?
COULD BE.
BUT THIS ISN'T A JOYRIDE, BRO'. WE'RE UP HERE ON BUSINESS--KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED.
FOR MOST OF THE DAY, THEY CRISS-CROSS THE MOUNTAINS ALONG LILA'S FILED ROUTE, SKIMMING THE RIDGES AT TREE-TOP HEIGHT AND SWOOPING HEADLONG INTO THE DEEP, TWISTING RAVINES.
THEN, TOWARDS SUNSET...
Oh, MY LORD.
WHAT A MESS.
WATCH YOUR STEP. THIS SLOPE'S NONE TOO STABLE.
CABIN'S BURIED. IF AH TRY TO SMASH THROUGH AS CANNONBALL, AH'LL BRING THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN DOWN ON TOP OF US.
AH'M LOTS SMALLER'N YOU, SAM.
AH'LL TRY AN' WRIGGLE MY WAY...
...THROUGH THE TREES.
BE CAREFUL, JOSH.
AH DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU, TOO!
LILA WAS UPSET, 'CAUSE OF WHAT AH SAID.
THIS IS MY FAULT.
BE OKAY, DARLIN'-- PLEASE!
HEY, SAM--
--AH SEE A LIGHT!


AH'M JOSH GUTHRIE--WHO'S THERE?!
*ALISON BLAIRE!* I'M ALL RIGHT, BUT LILA AND CONAL DURAN WERE HURT IN THE CRASH!
AH BARELY MADE IT THROUGH THIS MAZE. AIN'T NO WAY WE CAN DRAG INJURED PEOPLE OUT. AN' MY BROTHER, SAM, DON'T DARE PUNCH A TUNNEL DOWN TO YOU, HE'LL TRIGGER AN AVALANCHE.
JOSH, I... I'M *DAZZLER*-- THE MUTANT SINGER. I COULD CUT A TUNNEL WITH MY LASER POWERS, BUT I'M ALMOST TOTALLY DRAINED OF ENERGY. I NEED SOUND-- MUSIC'S BEST-- TO RECHARGE.
EITHER OF YOU HAVE A RADIO?
NO, MA'AM. BUT...
...AH SING SOME.
WILL THAT DO?
*SAM HAD HEARD HIS BROTHER IN TOWN...*
*...BUT THAT WAS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE WONDROUS, IMPOSSIBLE BEAUTY THAT NOW FILLS THE AIR.*
IT'S LIKE, HE'S A ONE-MAN CHOIR.
ALI'S LASER BLAST-- HE'S DONE IT!
WAY TO GO, JOSH!
LI'L BROTHER, THAT WAS *BEAUTIFUL!*
HAPPENED WHEN MY VOICE CHANGED AN' ALL.
MOMMA FIGURES IT'S *MY* SPECIAL GIFT, LIKE YOUR FLYIN'.
YOU ASK ME, YOU GOT THE BETTER OF THE DEAL.
WHAT ABOUT THE LITTLE ONES, SAM? WHAT POWERS WILL *THEY* GET?!
WISH AH KNEW.
ALI--HOW'S LILA?!!
DO YOU CARE, SAM?
HOW COULD YOU BE SO ROTTEN, AFTER WHAT SHE WENT THROUGH TO GET THAT GIFT FOR YOUR MOTHER?!
I WISH I HAD SOMEONE TO CARE--AND DO-- AS MUCH FOR ME.
IT TOOK LILA A MONTH TO MINE THE CRYSTAL-- AND LONGER STILL TO CARVE IT. THE SLIGHTEST MISTAKE ANYWHERE ALONG THE WAY WOULD HAVE SHATTERED IT TO DUST.
SHE *MADE* THAT FIGURE?! SHE DIDN'T *STEAL* IT?!!
ARE YOU KIDDING?! SAM, HOW COULD YOU EVEN *THINK* SUCH A THING?!


AVALANCHE!
SAM--THE CLIFF!
JOSH, ALI-- GRAB HOLD OF THE OTHERS!
VROOOM
Whew--
--THAT WAS CLOSE!
WHAT GIVES?! AH'VE HANDLED HEAVIER LOADS THAN THIS--BUT AH ALMOST DIDN'T GET OFF THE GROUND. BETTER CHECK THIS OUT, SOON AS AH CAN.
LILA?!
Oh, LILA-HONEY, AH'M SO SORRY! AH SHOULD'A KNOWN YOU BETTER.
BIGGEST JERK WHO EVER LIVED, THAT'S ME.
AH WISH... AH HOPE-- PLEASE BE OKAY--
--AN' AH'LL... UNDERSTAND... IF YOU HATE ME FOREVER. AH ALREADY HATE MYSELF.
BOY, YOU ARE SO LUCKY...
...I'M THE FORGIVING SORT...
...WHEN IT COMES TO THE MAN I LOVE.


SUNDAY...
WHERE THE HECK *IS* SHE?!
LOOK AT YOUR WATCH, DUMMY! LILA AIN'T LATE.
FEELS LIKE AH'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR*EVER*!
BE HEADIN' BACK TO SCHOOL NEXT WEEK. REJOININ' THE NEW MUTANTS.
IF NOTHIN' ELSE, AH'LL BE THERE TO MAYBE GIVE THE YOUNGER TEAM MEMBERS SOMEONE TO TURN TO WITH THEIR TROUBLES.
AN', AT THE SAME TIME, AH'LL KEEP TABS ON MAG
*NEAT*
*ohmylord!?!*
LIKE ME, SAM?
AH... LOVE YOU, LILA.
Oh, MOMMA! SHE'LL DIE! SHE'LL KILL ME! THE KIDS'LL LAUGH!
HOW CAN AH...?
HOW CAN AH NOT...?
I BROUGHT THE STATUE.
PERHAPS IT'S BETTER FLAWED...
...SINCE NONE OF US ARE PERFECT, EITHER.
WELL...
...SHALL WE GO IN?
...IT'S TIME, LILA...
*LILA--?!*
Oh, *NO!* WHAT'D AH SAY, WHAT'D AH DO, AH'VE BOTCHED EVERYTHING...
...SHE'S THROUGH WITH ME, IT'S OVER--
--WOW.
LILA!
I HAD TO KNOW YOU'D GO THROUGH WITH IT, SAM. I'D NEVER SHAME YOU, MY LOVE...
...BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, I NEVER WANT YOU TO FEEL ASHAMED OF ME.
*SAMUEL?*
MOMMA--
--THIS IS LILA.
WELCOME.
NEXT: *GETTING EVEN!*

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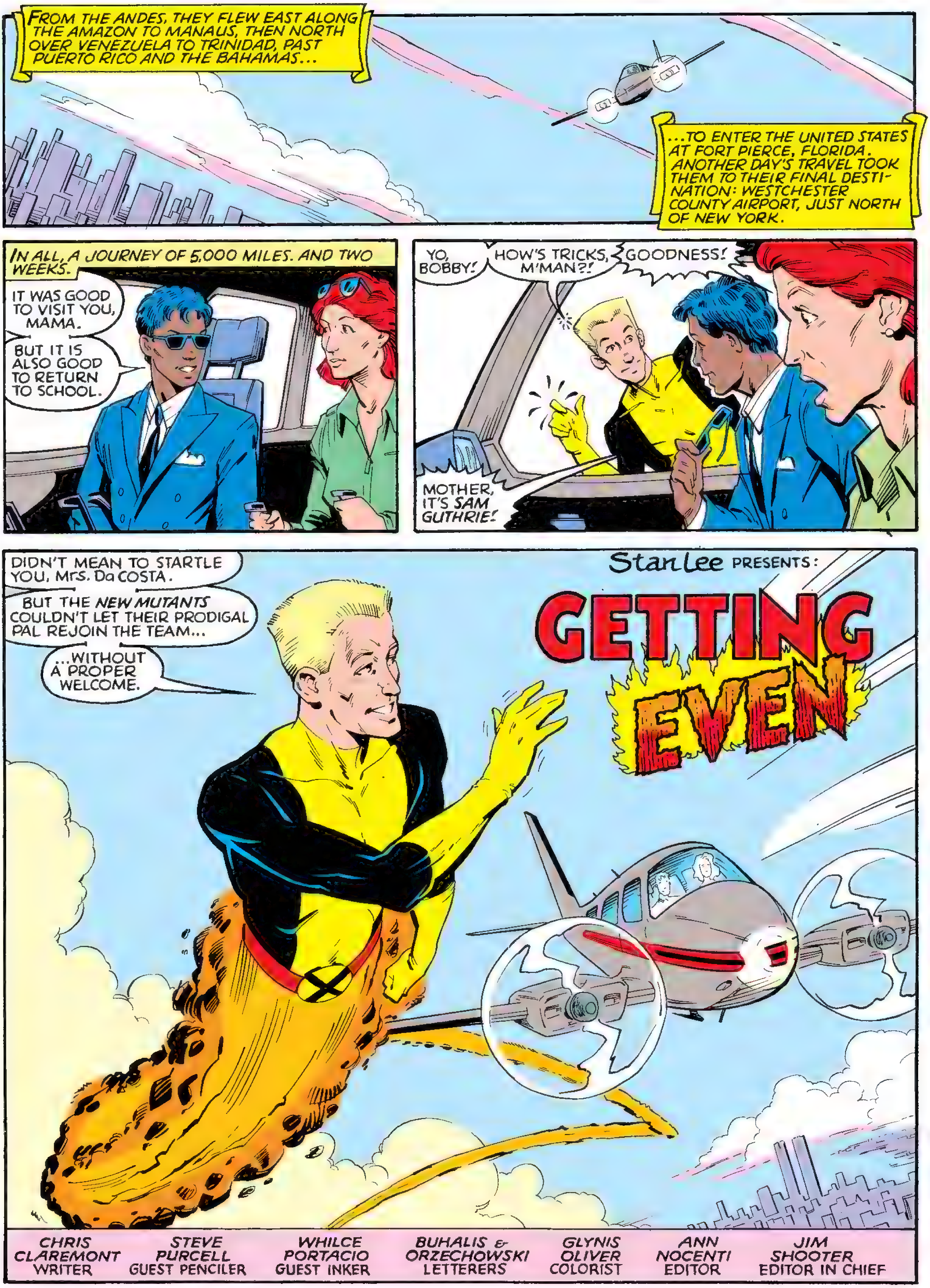
FROM THE ANDES, THEY FLEW EAST ALONG THE AMAZON TO MANAUS, THEN NORTH OVER VENEZUELA TO TRINIDAD, PAST PUERTO RICO AND THE BAHAMAS...
...TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES AT FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA. ANOTHER DAY'S TRAVEL TOOK THEM TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATION: WESTCHESTER COUNTY AIRPORT, JUST NORTH OF NEW YORK.
IN ALL, A JOURNEY OF 5,000 MILES. AND TWO WEEKS.
IT WAS GOOD TO VISIT YOU, MAMA.
BUT IT IS ALSO GOOD TO RETURN TO SCHOOL.
YO, BOBBY!
HOW'S TRICKS, M'MAN?!
GOODNESS!
MOTHER, IT'S SAM GUTHRIE!
DIDN'T MEAN TO STARTLE YOU, Mrs. Da COSTA.
BUT THE *NEW MUTANTS* COULDN'T LET THEIR PRODIGAL PAL REJOIN THE TEAM...
...WITHOUT A PROPER WELCOME.
Stan Lee PRESENTS:
GETTING EVEN
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
STEVE PURCELL GUEST PENCILER
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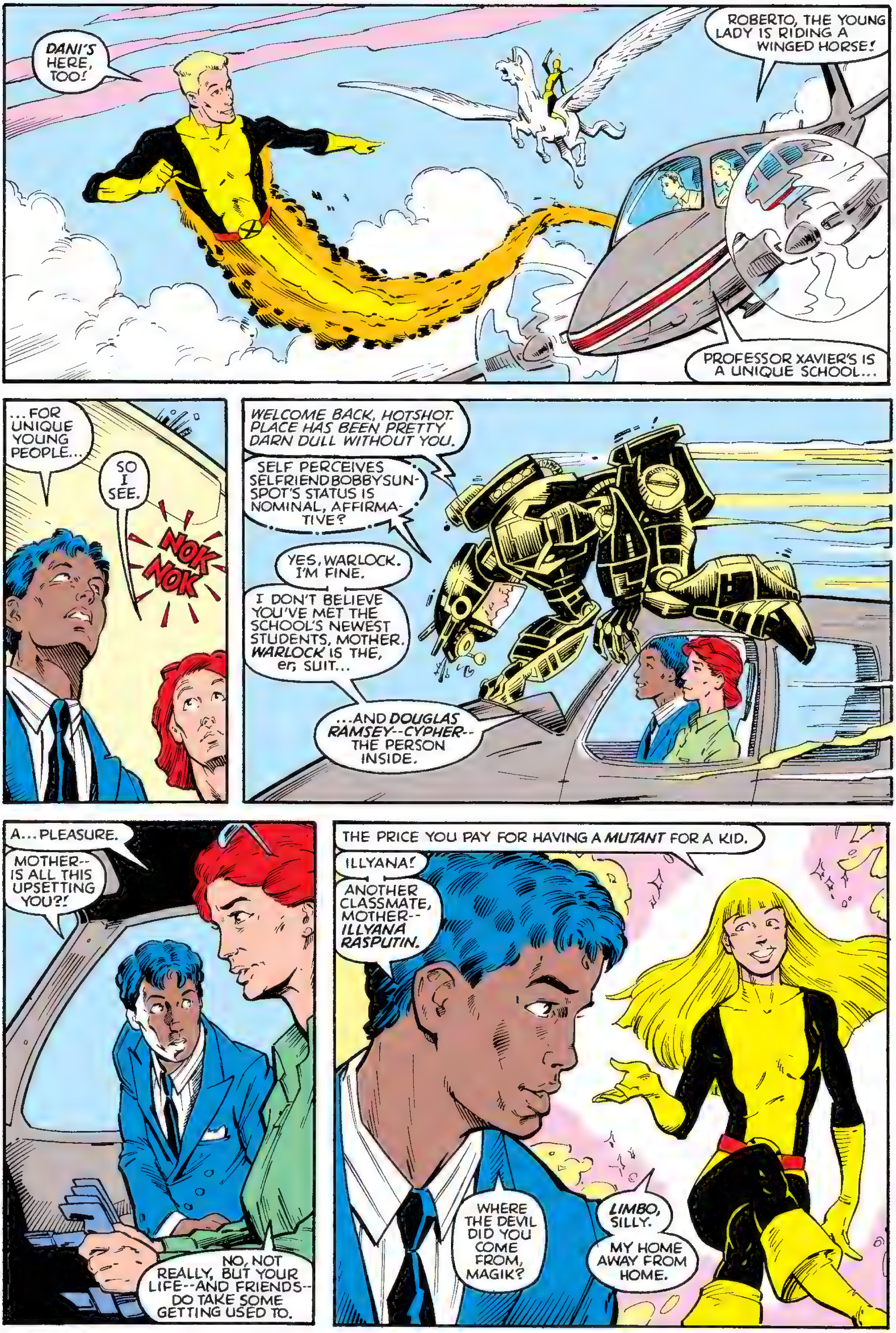
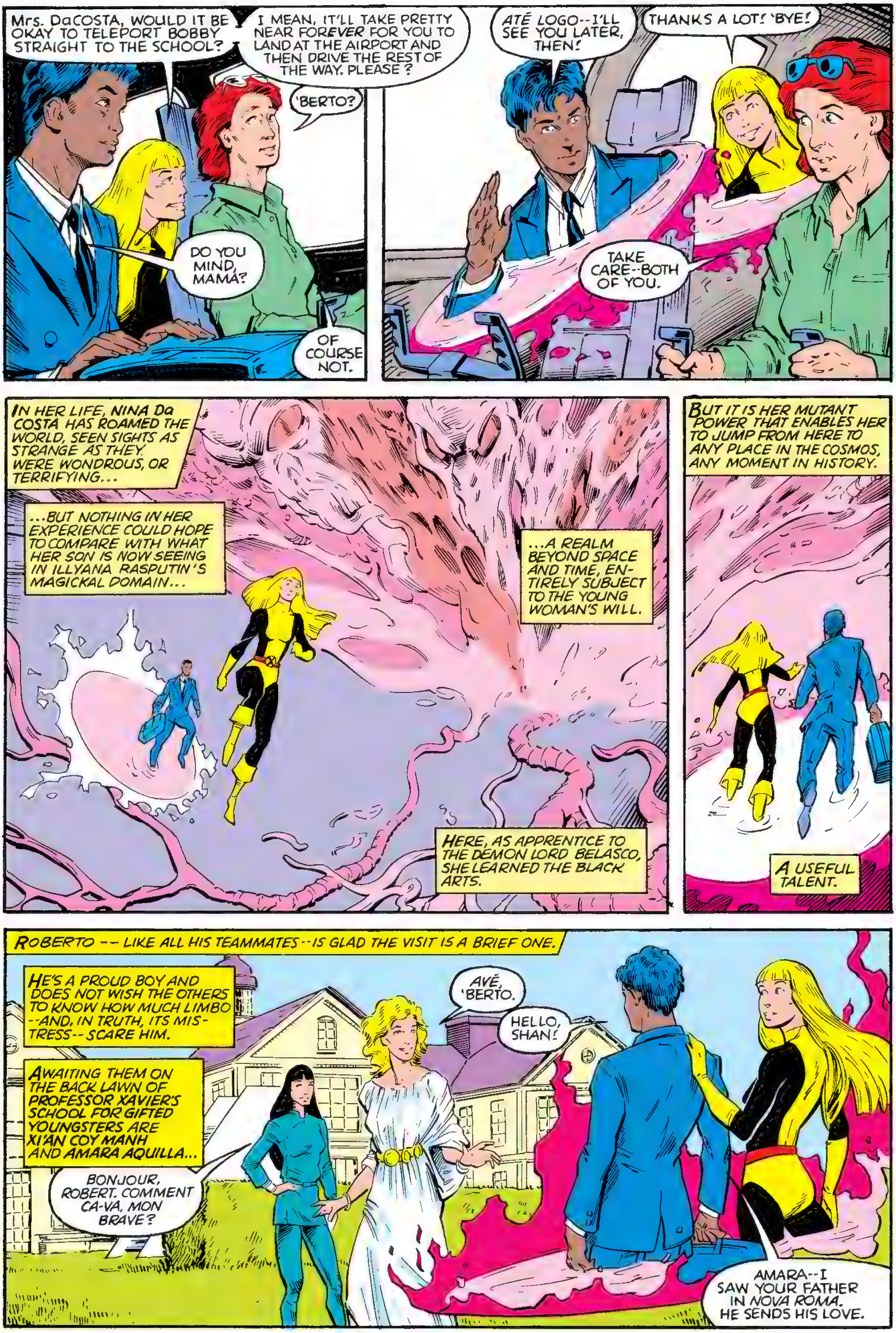
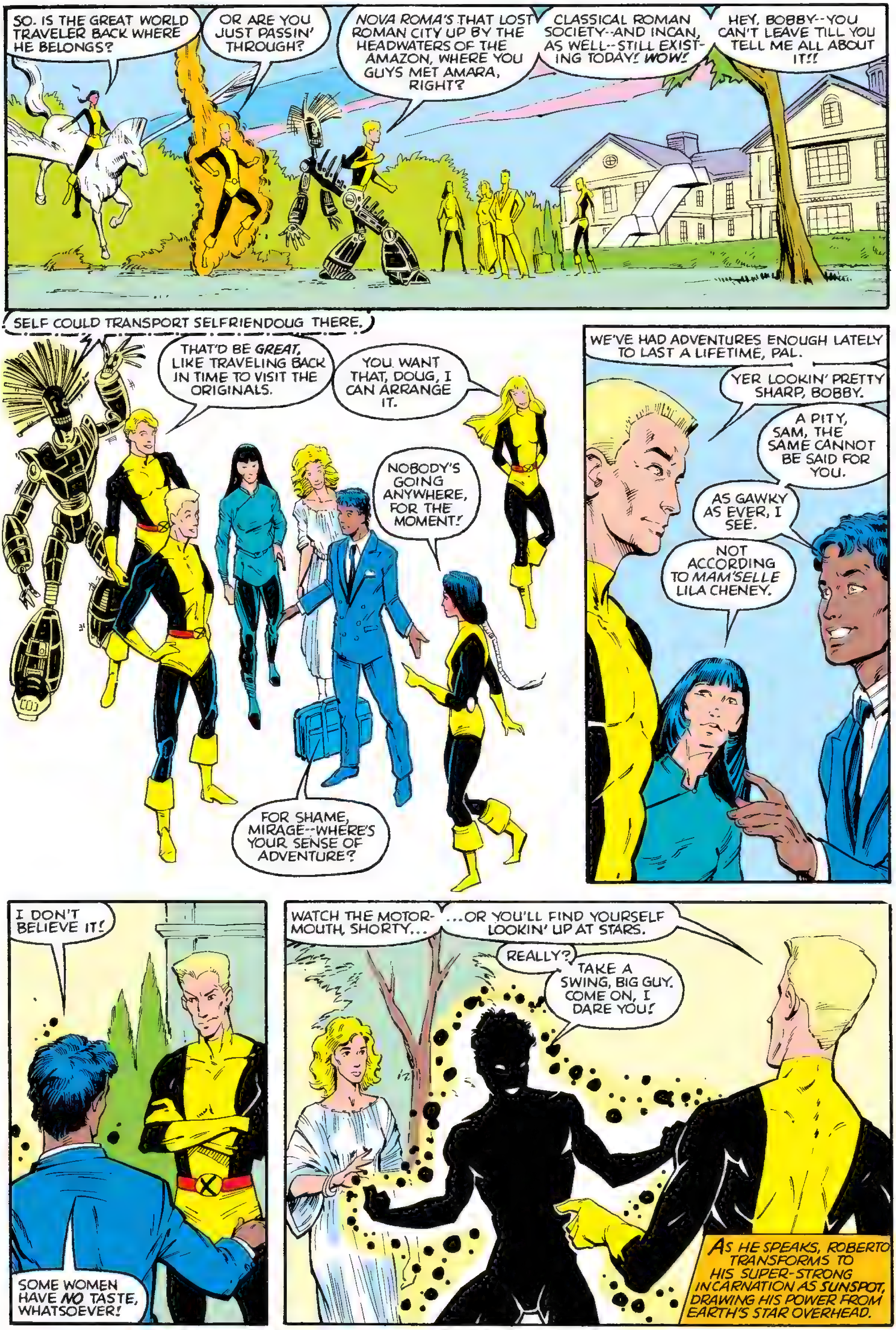
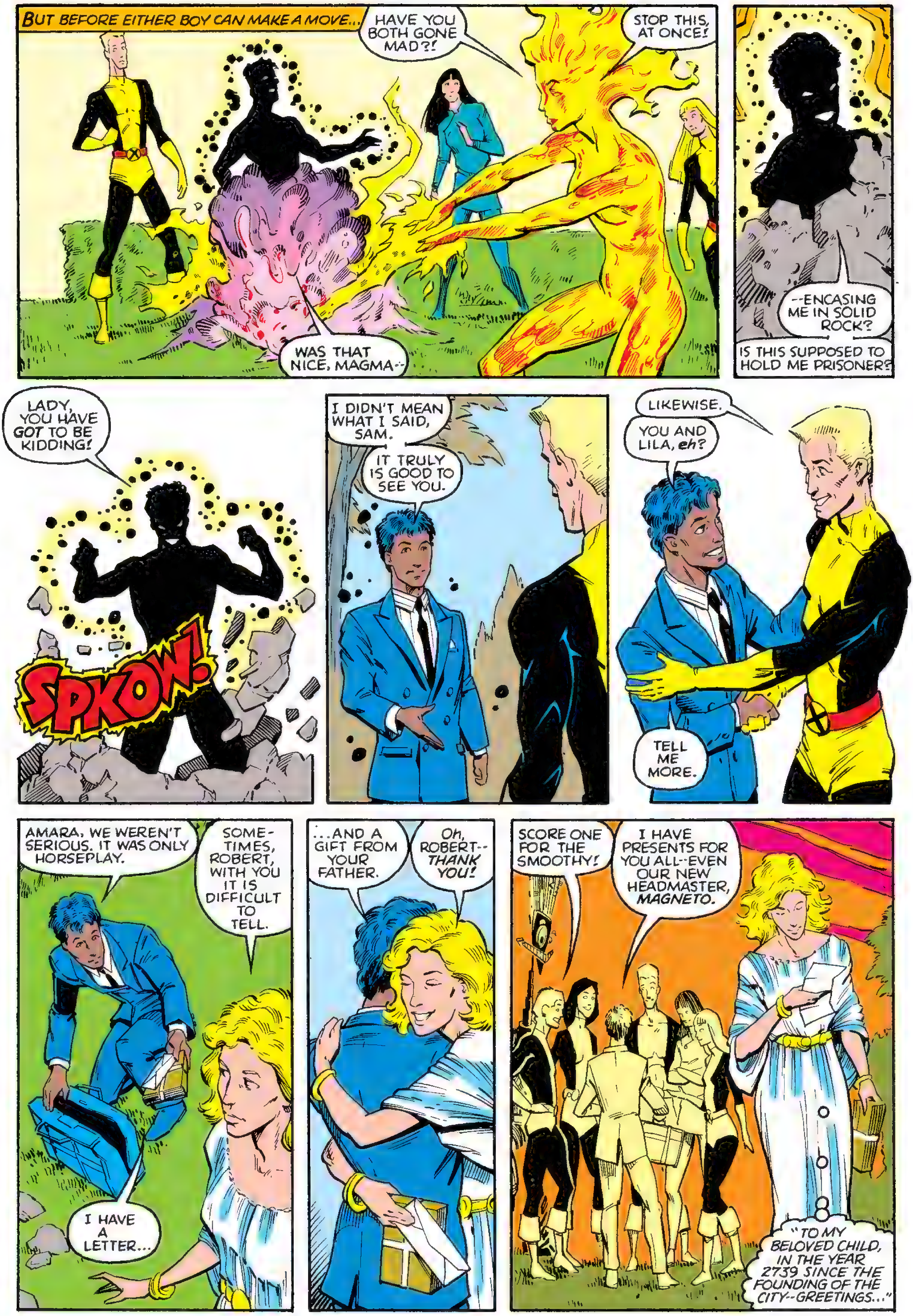
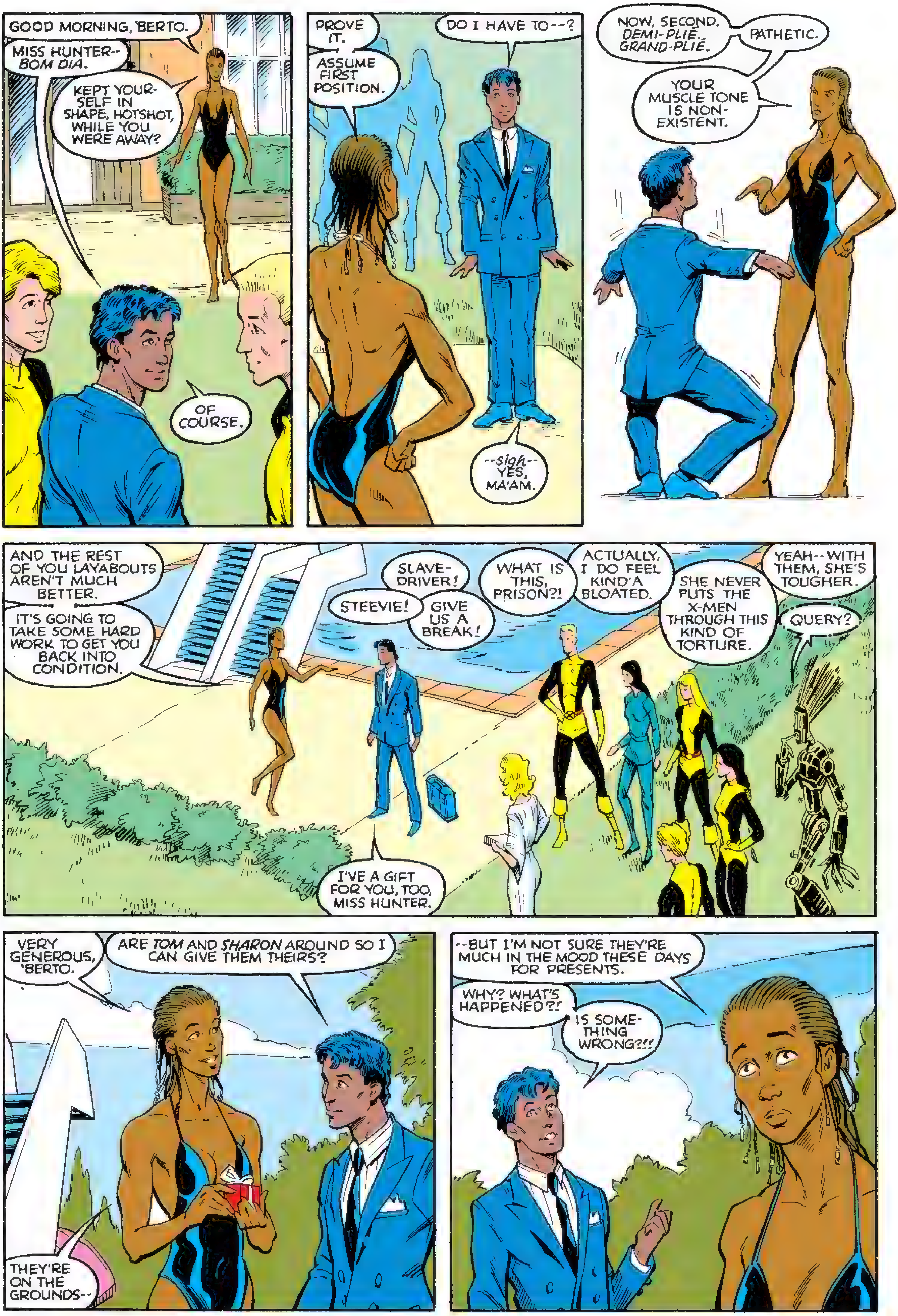
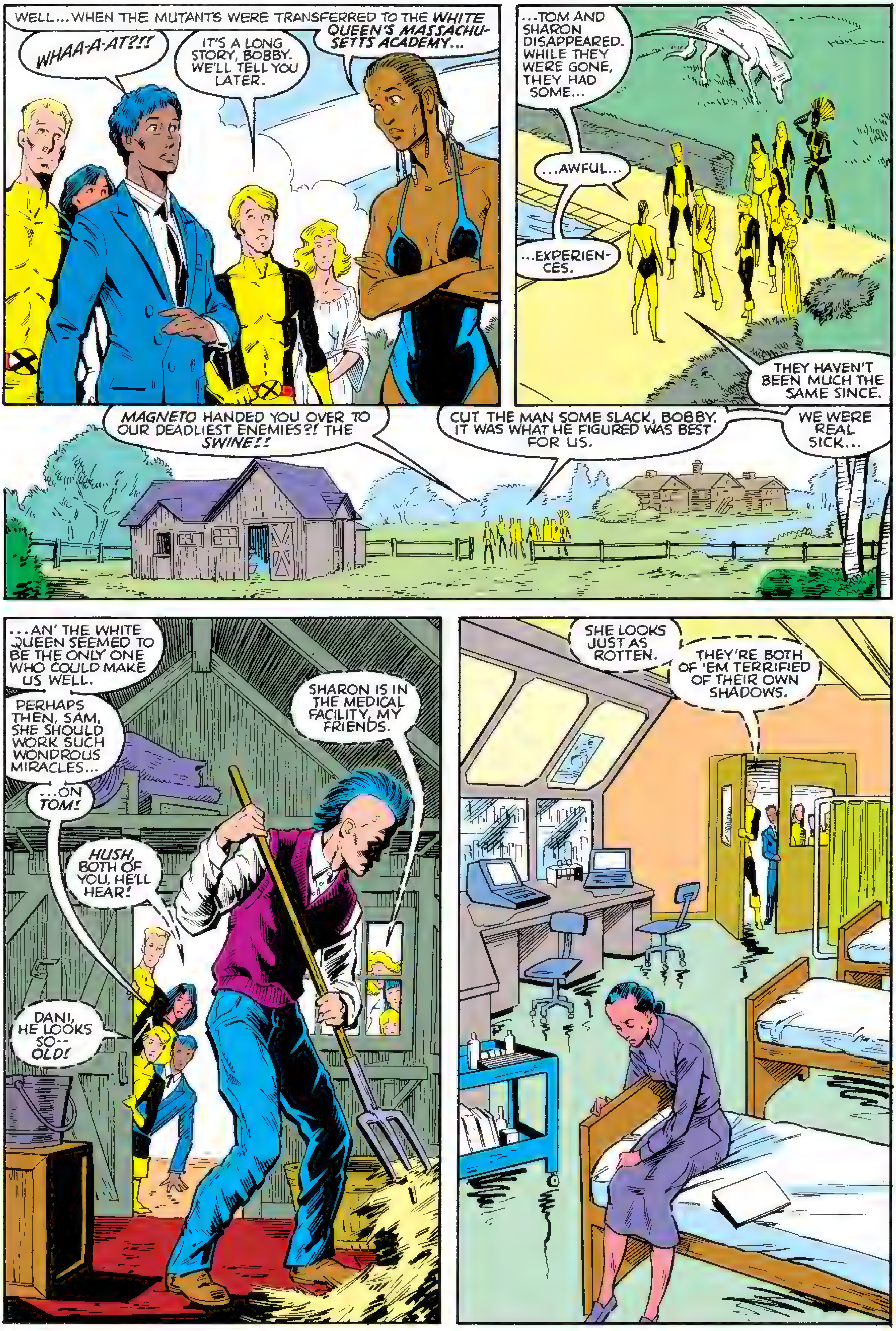

DANI'S HERE, TOO!
ROBERTO, THE YOUNG LADY IS RIDING A WINGED HORSE!
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S IS A UNIQUE SCHOOL...
...FOR UNIQUE YOUNG PEOPLE...
SO I SEE.
NOK NOK
WELCOME BACK, HOTSHOT. PLACE HAS BEEN PRETTY DARN DULL WITHOUT YOU.
SELF PERCEIVES SELFRIEND BOBBY SUNSPOT'S STATUS IS NOMINAL, AFFIRMATIVE?
YES, WARLOCK. I'M FINE.
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU'VE MET THE SCHOOL'S NEWEST STUDENTS, MOTHER. WARLOCK IS THE, er, SUIT...
...AND DOUGLAS RAMSEY--CYPHER--THE PERSON INSIDE.
A... PLEASURE.
MOTHER--IS ALL THIS UPSETTING YOU?!
NO, NOT REALLY, BUT YOUR LIFE--AND FRIENDS--DO TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.
THE PRICE YOU PAY FOR HAVING A MUTANT FOR A KID.
ILLYANA!
ANOTHER CLASSMATE, MOTHER--ILLYANA RASPUTIN.
WHERE THE DEVIL DID YOU COME FROM, MAGIK?
LIMBO, SILLY.
MY HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

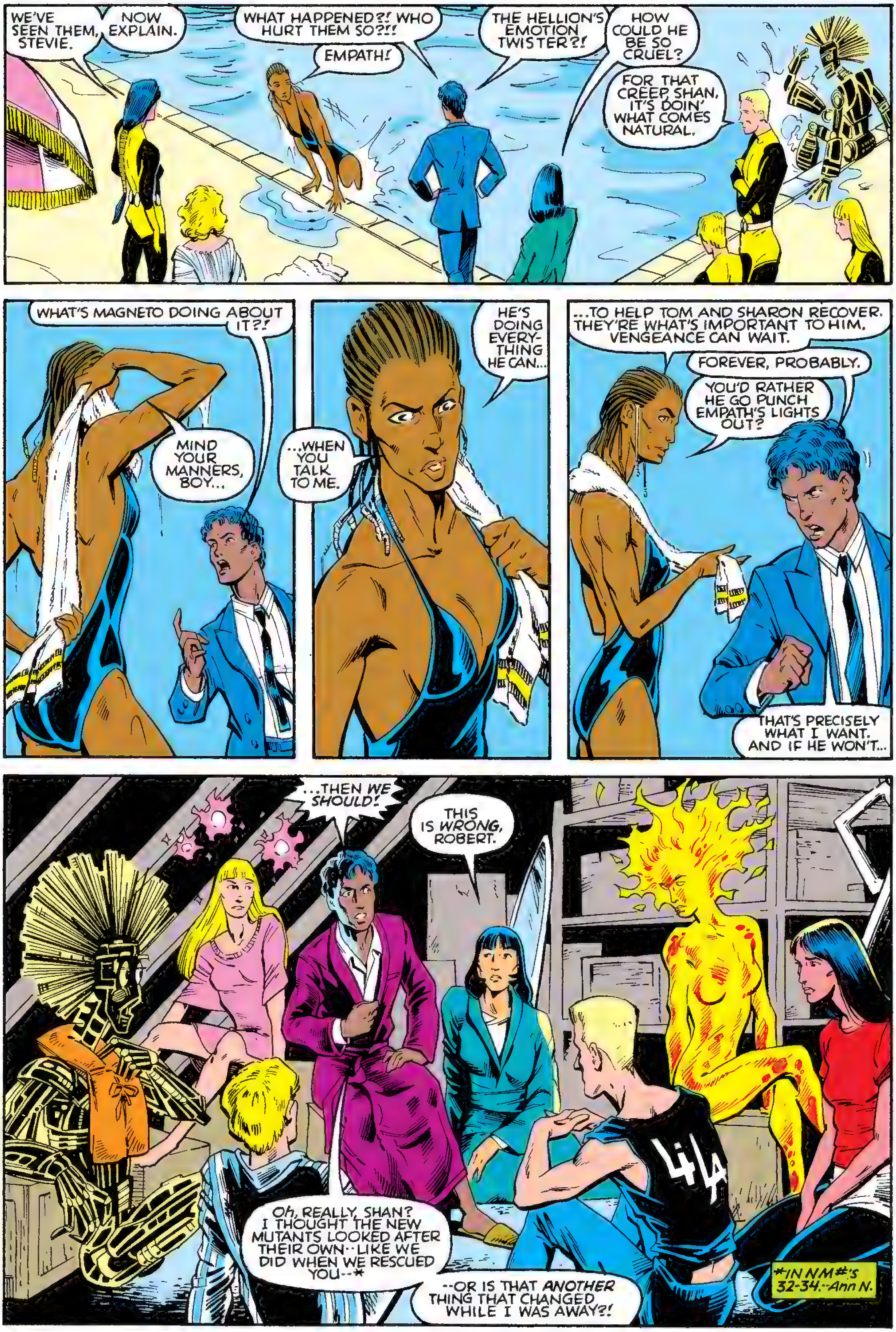

Mrs. DaCOSTA, WOULD IT BE OKAY TO TELEPORT BOBBY STRAIGHT TO THE SCHOOL?
I MEAN, IT'LL TAKE PRETTY NEAR FOREVER FOR YOU TO LAND AT THE AIRPORT AND THEN DRIVE THE REST OF THE WAY. PLEASE?
'BERTO?
DO YOU MIND, MAMÁ?
OF COURSE NOT.
ATÉ LOGO--I'LL SEE YOU LATER, THEN!
THANKS A LOT! 'BYE!
TAKE CARE--BOTH OF YOU.
IN HER LIFE, NINA Da COSTA HAS ROAMED THE WORLD, SEEN SIGHTS AS STRANGE AS THEY WERE WONDROUS, OR TERRIFYING...
...BUT NOTHING IN HER EXPERIENCE COULD HOPE TO COMPARE WITH WHAT HER SON IS NOW SEEING IN ILLYANA RASPUTIN'S MAGICKAL DOMAIN...
...A REALM BEYOND SPACE AND TIME, ENTIRELY SUBJECT TO THE YOUNG WOMAN'S WILL.
HERE, AS APPRENTICE TO THE DEMON LORD BELASCO, SHE LEARNED THE BLACK ARTS.
BUT IT IS HER MUTANT POWER THAT ENABLES HER TO JUMP FROM HERE TO ANY PLACE IN THE COSMOS, ANY MOMENT IN HISTORY.
A USEFUL TALENT.
ROBERTO -- LIKE ALL HIS TEAMMATES -- IS GLAD THE VISIT IS A BRIEF ONE.
HE'S A PROUD BOY AND DOES NOT WISH THE OTHERS TO KNOW HOW MUCH LIMBO --AND, IN TRUTH, ITS MISTRESS-- SCARE HIM.
AWAITING THEM ON THE BACK LAWN OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS ARE XI'AN COY MANH AND AMARA AQUILLA...
AVÉ, 'BERTO.
HELLO, SHAN!
BONJOUR, ROBERT. COMMENT CA-VA, MON BRAVE?
AMARA--I SAW YOUR FATHER IN NOVA ROMA. HE SENDS HIS LOVE.

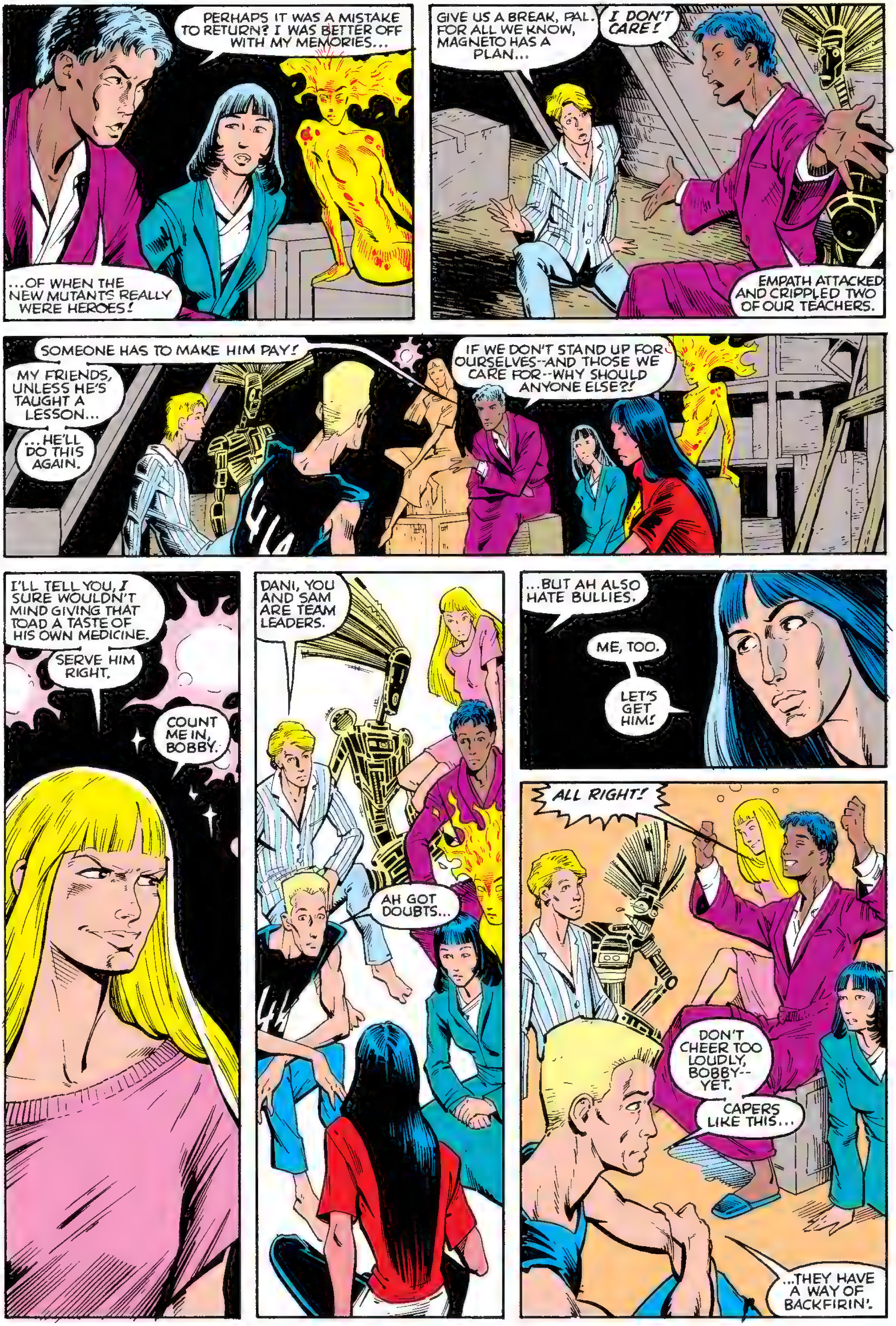

SO. IS THE GREAT WORLD TRAVELER BACK WHERE HE BELONGS?
OR ARE YOU JUST PASSIN' THROUGH?
*NOVA ROMA'S* THAT LOST ROMAN CITY UP BY THE HEADWATERS OF THE AMAZON, WHERE YOU GUYS MET AMARA, RIGHT?
CLASSICAL ROMAN SOCIETY--AND INCAN, AS WELL--STILL EXISTING TODAY! *WOW!*
HEY, BOBBY--YOU CAN'T LEAVE TILL YOU TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT!!
SELF COULD TRANSPORT SELFRIENDOUG THERE.
THAT'D BE *GREAT,* LIKE TRAVELING BACK IN TIME TO VISIT THE ORIGINALS.
YOU WANT THAT, DOUG, I CAN ARRANGE IT.
NOBODY'S GOING ANYWHERE, FOR THE MOMENT!
FOR SHAME, MIRAGE--WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE?
WE'VE HAD ADVENTURES ENOUGH LATELY TO LAST A LIFETIME, PAL.
YER LOOKIN' PRETTY SHARP, BOBBY.
A PITY, SAM, THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR YOU.
AS GAWKY AS EVER, I SEE.
NOT ACCORDING TO *MAM'SELLE* LILA CHENEY.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
SOME WOMEN HAVE *NO* TASTE, WHATSOEVER!
WATCH THE MOTORMOUTH, SHORTY...
...OR YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF LOOKIN' UP AT STARS.
REALLY?
TAKE A SWING, BIG GUY. COME ON, I DARE YOU!
*AS HE SPEAKS, ROBERTO TRANSFORMS TO HIS SUPER-STRONG INCARNATION AS SUNSPOT, DRAWING HIS POWER FROM EARTH'S STAR OVERHEAD.*

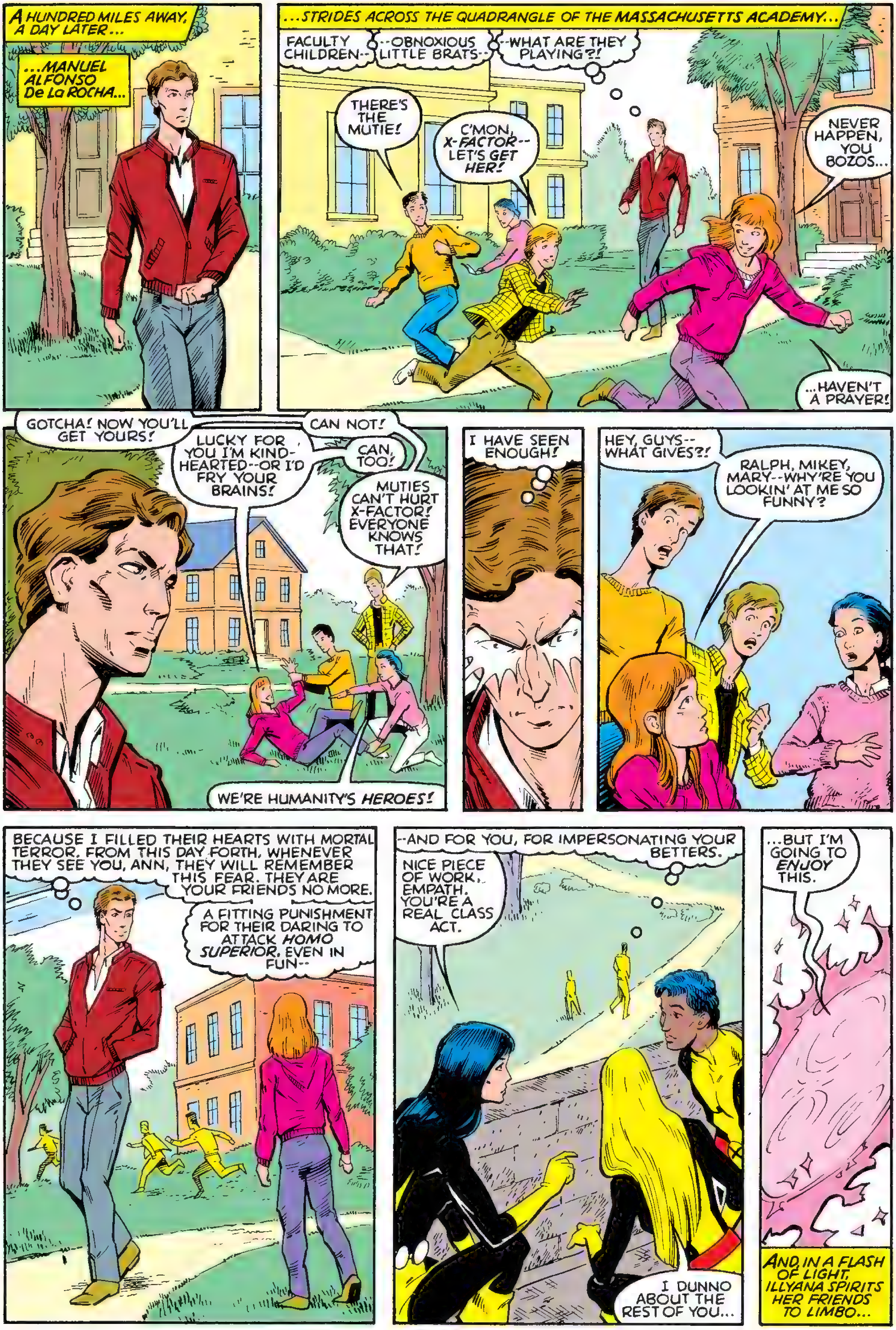

BUT BEFORE EITHER BOY CAN MAKE A MOVE...
HAVE YOU BOTH GONE MAD?!
STOP THIS, AT ONCE!
WAS THAT NICE, MAGMA--
--ENCASING ME IN SOLID ROCK?
IS THIS SUPPOSED TO HOLD ME PRISONER?
LADY, YOU HAVE *GOT* TO BE KIDDING!
SPKOW!
I DIDN'T MEAN WHAT I SAID, SAM.
IT TRULY IS GOOD TO SEE YOU.
LIKEWISE.
YOU AND LILA, *eh*?
TELL ME MORE.
AMARA, WE WEREN'T SERIOUS. IT WAS ONLY HORSEPLAY.
SOMETIMES, ROBERT, WITH YOU IT IS DIFFICULT TO TELL.
I HAVE A LETTER...
...AND A GIFT FROM YOUR FATHER.
*Oh*, ROBERT-- *THANK YOU!*
SCORE ONE FOR THE SMOOTHY!
I HAVE PRESENTS FOR YOU ALL--EVEN OUR NEW HEADMASTER, *MAGNETO*.
*"TO MY BELOVED CHILD, IN THE YEAR 2739 SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY--GREETINGS..."*

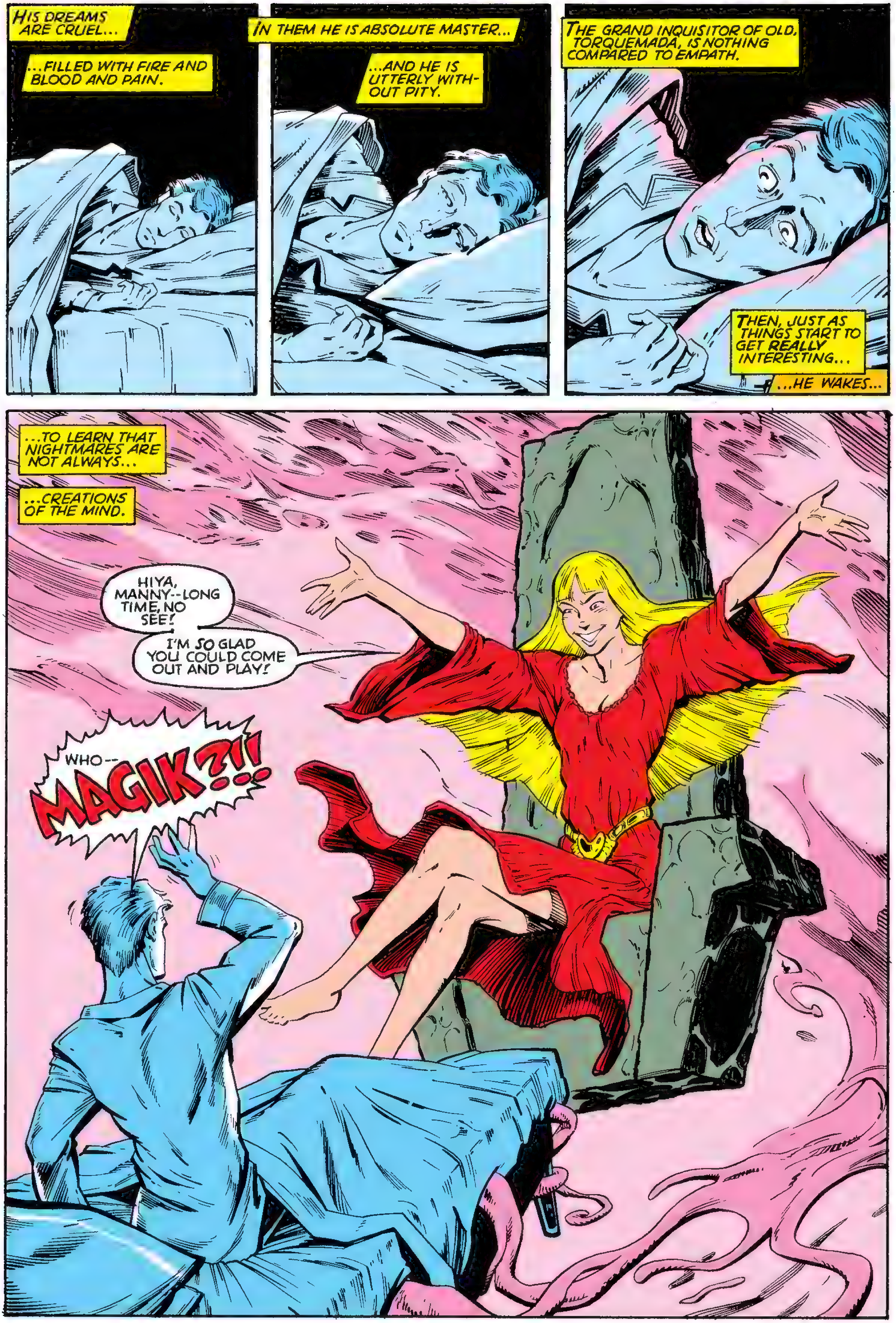

GOOD MORNING, 'BERTO.
MISS HUNTER-- *BOM DIA*.
KEPT YOURSELF IN SHAPE, HOTSHOT, WHILE YOU WERE AWAY?
OF COURSE.
PROVE IT.
DO I HAVE TO--?
ASSUME FIRST POSITION.
--*sigh*-- YES, MA'AM.
NOW, SECOND. *DEMI-PLIÉ*. *GRAND-PLIÉ*.
PATHETIC.
YOUR MUSCLE TONE IS NON-EXISTENT.
AND THE REST OF YOU LAYABOUTS AREN'T MUCH BETTER.
IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME HARD WORK TO GET YOU BACK INTO CONDITION.
SLAVE-DRIVER!
STEEVIE!
GIVE US A BREAK!
WHAT IS THIS, PRISON?!
ACTUALLY, I DO FEEL KIND'A BLOATED.
SHE NEVER PUTS THE X-MEN THROUGH THIS KIND OF TORTURE.
YEAH--WITH THEM, SHE'S TOUGHER.
QUERY?
I'VE A GIFT FOR YOU, TOO, MISS HUNTER.
VERY GENEROUS, 'BERTO.
ARE *TOM* AND *SHARON* AROUND SO I CAN GIVE THEM THEIRS?
THEY'RE ON THE GROUNDS--
--BUT I'M NOT SURE THEY'RE MUCH IN THE MOOD THESE DAYS FOR PRESENTS.
WHY? WHAT'S HAPPENED?!
IS SOMETHING WRONG?!!

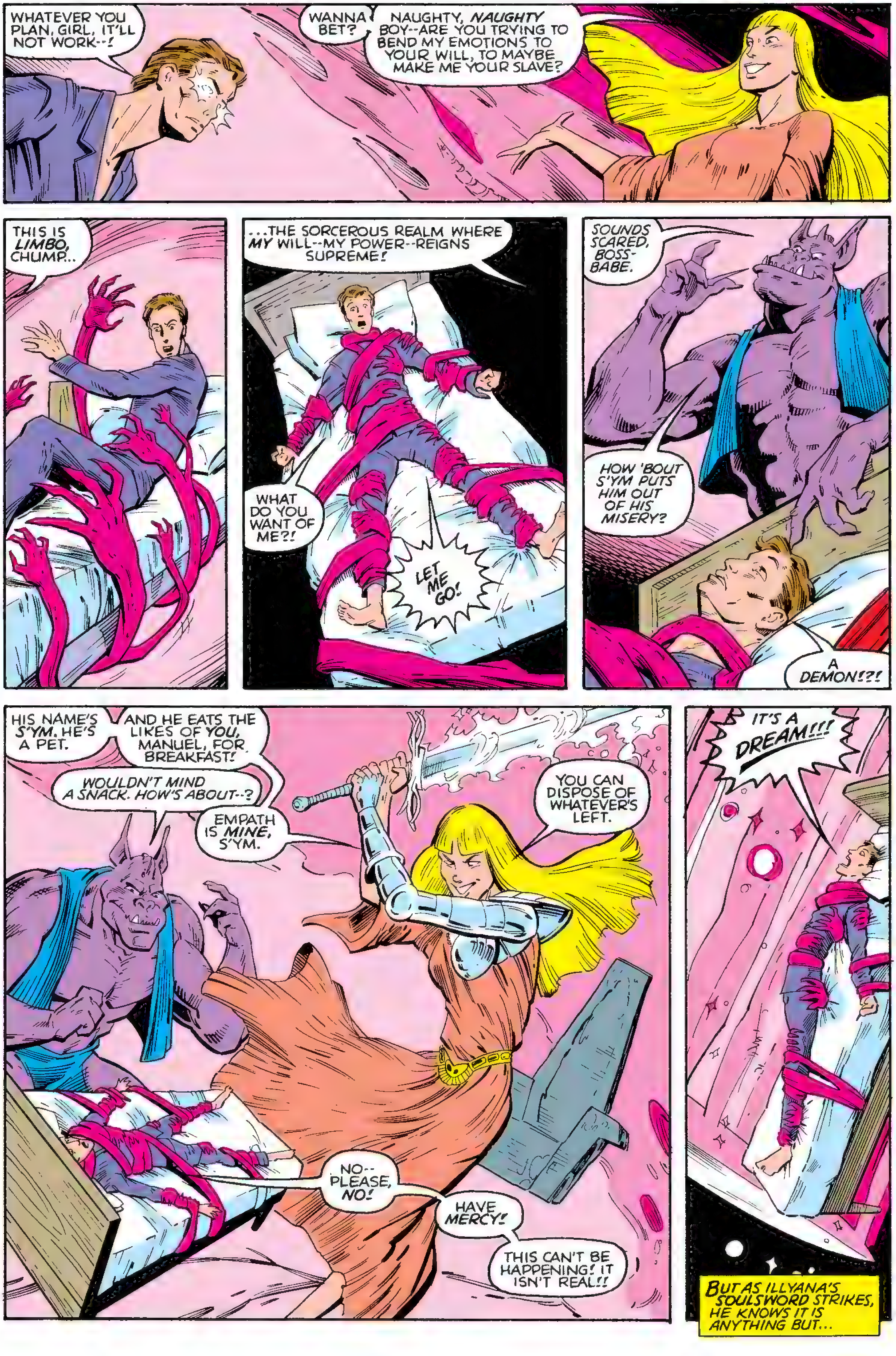

WELL... WHEN THE MUTANTS WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE *WHITE QUEEN'S MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY*...
*WHAA-A-AT?!!*
IT'S A LONG STORY, BOBBY. WE'LL TELL YOU LATER.
...TOM AND SHARON DISAPPEARED. WHILE THEY WERE GONE, THEY HAD SOME...
...AWFUL...
...EXPERIENCES.
THEY HAVEN'T BEEN MUCH THE SAME SINCE.
*MAGNETO* HANDED YOU OVER TO OUR DEADLIEST ENEMIES?! THE *SWINE!!*
CUT THE MAN SOME SLACK, BOBBY. IT WAS WHAT HE FIGURED WAS BEST FOR US.
WE WERE REAL SICK...
...AN' THE WHITE QUEEN SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD MAKE US WELL.
PERHAPS THEN, SAM, SHE SHOULD WORK SUCH WONDROUS MIRACLES...
...ON *TOM!*
SHARON IS IN THE MEDICAL FACILITY, MY FRIENDS.
*HUSH,* BOTH OF YOU, HE'LL HEAR!
DANI, HE LOOKS SO-- *OLD!*
SHE LOOKS JUST AS ROTTEN.
THEY'RE BOTH OF 'EM TERRIFIED OF THEIR OWN SHADOWS.

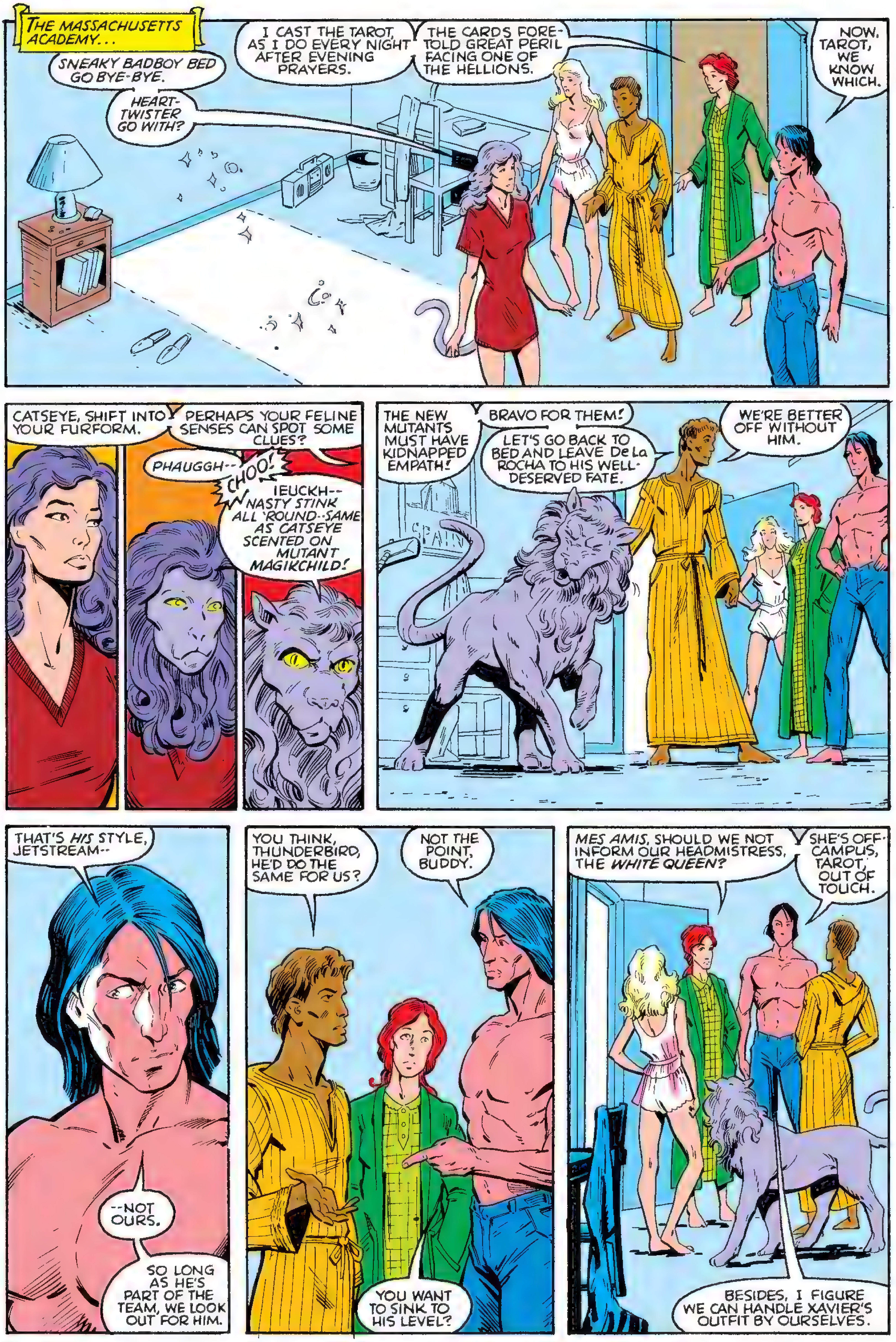

WE'VE SEEN THEM, STEVIE.
NOW EXPLAIN.
WHAT HAPPENED?! WHO HURT THEM SO?!!
EMPATH!
THE HELLION'S EMOTION TWISTER?!
HOW COULD HE BE SO CRUEL?
FOR THAT CREEP SHAN, IT'S DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURAL.
WHAT'S MAGNETO DOING ABOUT IT?!
MIND YOUR MANNERS, BOY...
HE'S DOING EVERYTHING HE CAN...
...WHEN YOU TALK TO ME.
...TO HELP TOM AND SHARON RECOVER. THEY'RE WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO HIM. VENGEANCE CAN WAIT.
FOREVER, PROBABLY.
YOU'D RATHER HE GO PUNCH EMPATH'S LIGHTS OUT?
THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I WANT. AND IF HE WON'T...
...THEN *WE* SHOULD!
THIS IS *WRONG*, ROBERT.
*Oh*, REALLY, SHAN? I THOUGHT THE NEW MUTANTS LOOKED AFTER THEIR OWN--LIKE WE DID WHEN WE RESCUED YOU--*
--OR IS THAT *ANOTHER* THING THAT CHANGED WHILE I WAS AWAY?!
*IN NM#'s 32-34.--Ann N.

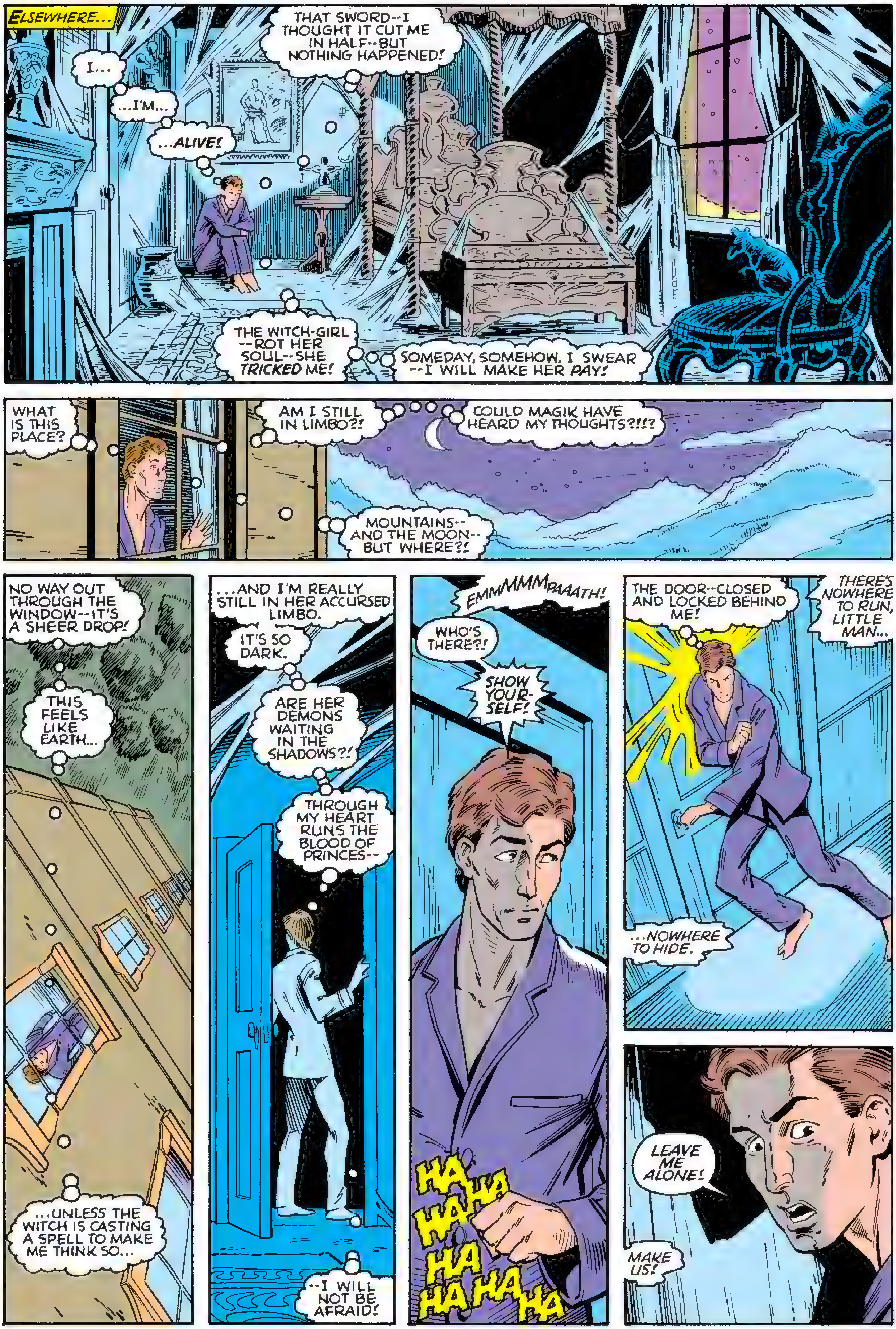

PERHAPS IT WAS A MISTAKE TO RETURN? I WAS BETTER OFF WITH MY MEMORIES...
...OF WHEN THE NEW MUTANTS REALLY WERE HEROES!
GIVE US A BREAK, PAL. FOR ALL WE KNOW, MAGNETO HAS A PLAN...
I DON'T CARE!
EMPATH ATTACKED AND CRIPPLED TWO OF OUR TEACHERS.
SOMEONE HAS TO MAKE HIM PAY!
MY FRIENDS, UNLESS HE'S TAUGHT A LESSON...
...HE'LL DO THIS AGAIN.
IF WE DON'T STAND UP FOR OURSELVES--AND THOSE WE CARE FOR--WHY SHOULD ANYONE ELSE?!
I'LL TELL YOU, I SURE WOULDN'T MIND GIVING THAT TOAD A TASTE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE.
SERVE HIM RIGHT.
COUNT ME IN, BOBBY.
DANI, YOU AND SAM ARE TEAM LEADERS.
AH GOT DOUBTS...
...BUT AH ALSO HATE BULLIES.
ME, TOO.
LET'S GET HIM!
ALL RIGHT!
DON'T CHEER TOO LOUDLY, BOBBY--YET.
CAPERS LIKE THIS...
...THEY HAVE A WAY OF BACKFIRIN'.

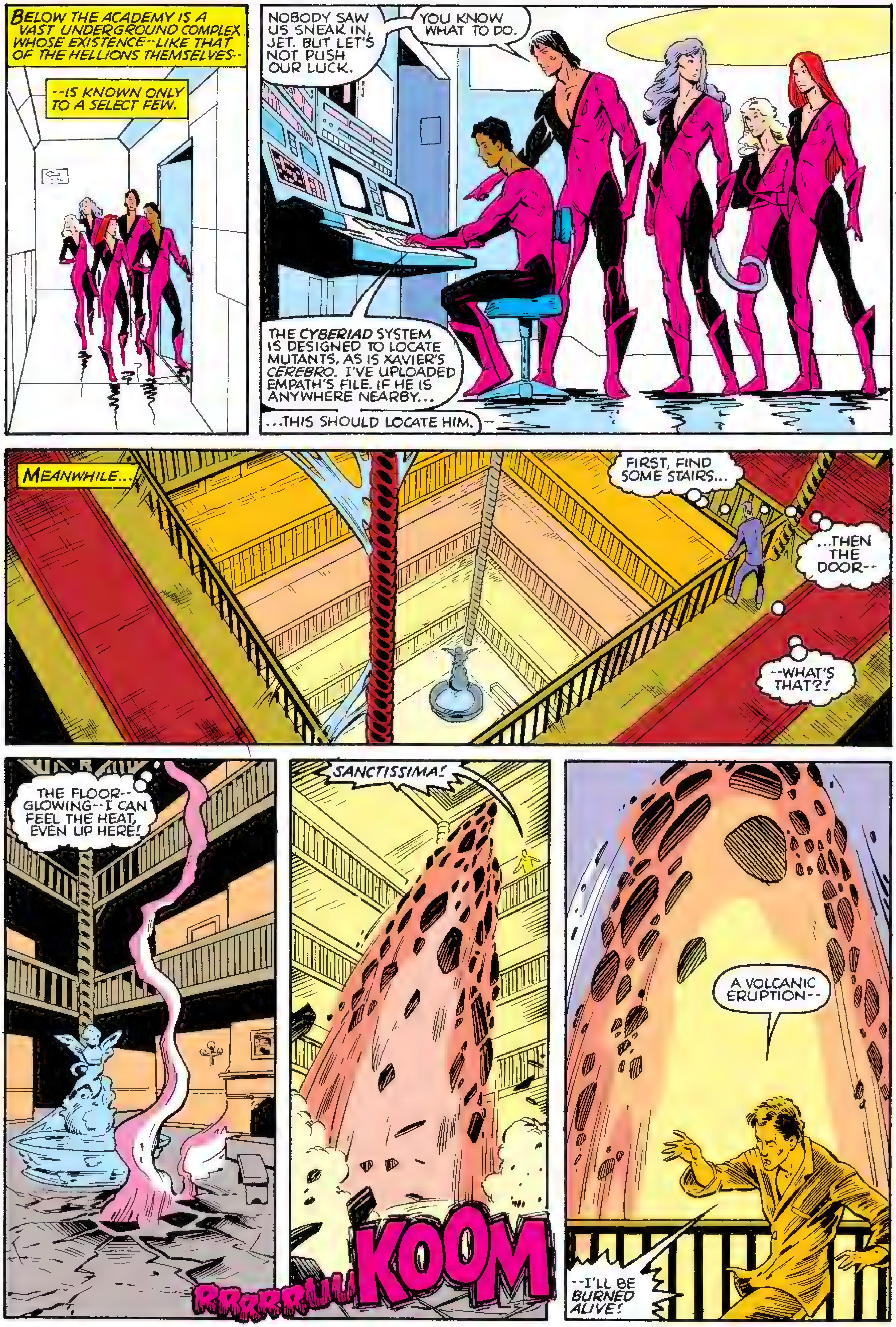

A HUNDRED MILES AWAY, A DAY LATER...
...MANUEL ALFONSO De La ROCHA...
...STRIDES ACROSS THE QUADRANGLE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY...
FACULTY CHILDREN--
--OBNOXIOUS LITTLE BRATS--
--WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING?!
THERE'S THE MUTIE!
C'MON, X-FACTOR--LET'S GET HER!
NEVER HAPPEN, YOU BOZOS...
...HAVEN'T A PRAYER!
GOTCHA! NOW YOU'LL GET YOURS!
LUCKY FOR YOU I'M KIND-HEARTED--OR I'D FRY YOUR BRAINS!
CAN NOT!
CAN, TOO!
MUTIES CAN'T HURT X-FACTOR! EVERYONE KNOWS THAT!
WE'RE HUMANITY'S HEROES!
I HAVE SEEN ENOUGH!
HEY, GUYS--WHAT GIVES?!
RALPH, MIKEY, MARY--WHY'RE YOU LOOKIN' AT ME SO FUNNY?
BECAUSE I FILLED THEIR HEARTS WITH MORTAL TERROR. FROM THIS DAY FORTH, WHENEVER THEY SEE YOU, ANN, THEY WILL REMEMBER THIS FEAR. THEY ARE YOUR FRIENDS NO MORE.
A FITTING PUNISHMENT FOR THEIR DARING TO ATTACK HOMO SUPERIOR, EVEN IN FUN--
--AND FOR YOU, FOR IMPERSONATING YOUR BETTERS.
NICE PIECE OF WORK, EMPATH. YOU'RE A REAL CLASS ACT.
I DUNNO ABOUT THE REST OF YOU...
...BUT I'M GOING TO ENJOY THIS.
AND, IN A FLASH OF LIGHT, ILLYANA SPIRITS HER FRIENDS TO LIMBO...

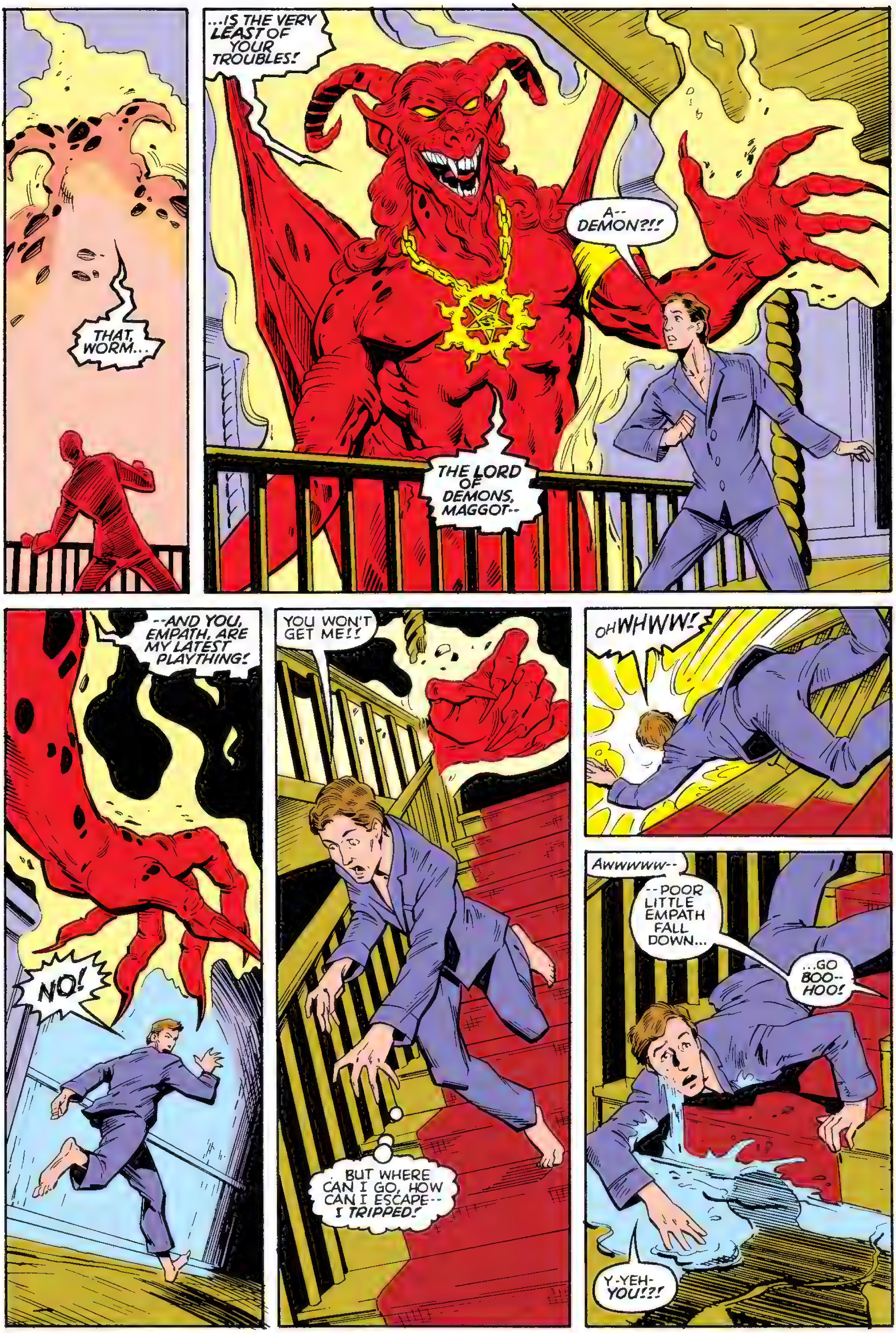

HIS DREAMS ARE CRUEL...
...FILLED WITH FIRE AND BLOOD AND PAIN.
IN THEM HE IS ABSOLUTE MASTER...
...AND HE IS UTTERLY WITHOUT PITY.
THE GRAND INQUISITOR OF OLD, TORQUEMADA, IS NOTHING COMPARED TO EMPATH.
THEN, JUST AS THINGS START TO GET REALLY INTERESTING...
...HE WAKES...
...TO LEARN THAT NIGHTMARES ARE NOT ALWAYS...
...CREATIONS OF THE MIND.
HIYA, MANNY--LONG TIME, NO SEE!
I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD COME OUT AND PLAY!
WHO-- MAGIK?!!

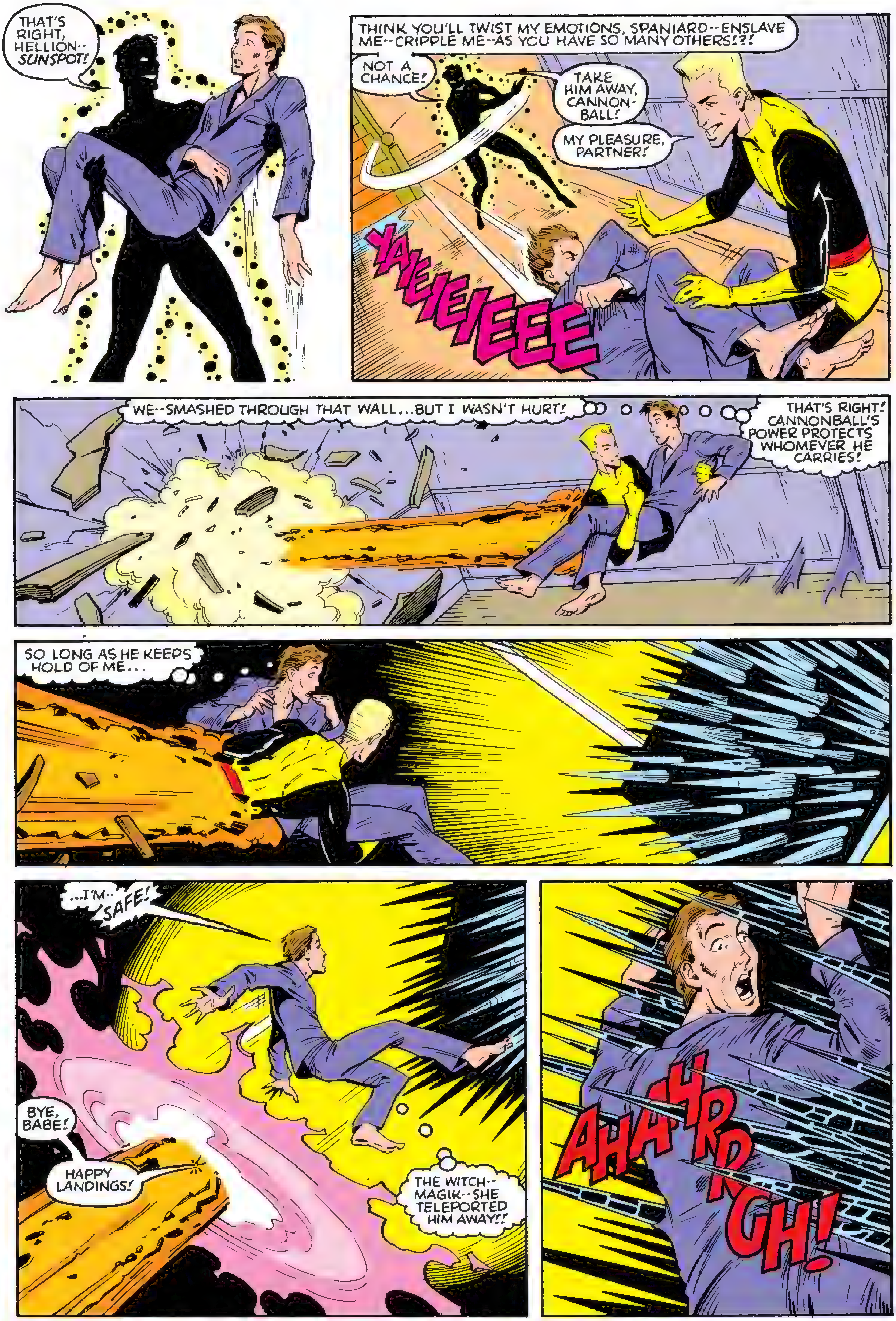

WHATEVER YOU PLAN, GIRL, IT'LL NOT WORK--!
WANNA BET?
NAUGHTY, *NAUGHTY* BOY--ARE YOU TRYING TO BEND MY EMOTIONS TO YOUR WILL, TO MAYBE MAKE ME YOUR SLAVE?
THIS IS *LIMBO,* CHUMP...
...THE SORCEROUS REALM WHERE *MY* WILL--MY POWER--REIGNS SUPREME!
WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?!
LET ME GO!
SOUNDS SCARED, BOSS-BABE.
HOW 'BOUT S'YM PUTS HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY?
A DEMON!?!
HIS NAME'S *S'YM.* HE'S A PET.
AND HE EATS THE LIKES OF *YOU,* MANUEL, FOR BREAKFAST!
WOULDN'T MIND A SNACK. HOW'S ABOUT--?
EMPATH IS *MINE,* S'YM.
YOU CAN DISPOSE OF WHATEVER'S LEFT.
NO-- PLEASE, *NO!*
HAVE *MERCY!*
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! IT ISN'T REAL!!
IT'S A DREAM!!!
BUT AS ILLYANA'S SOULSWORD STRIKES, HE KNOWS IT IS ANYTHING BUT...

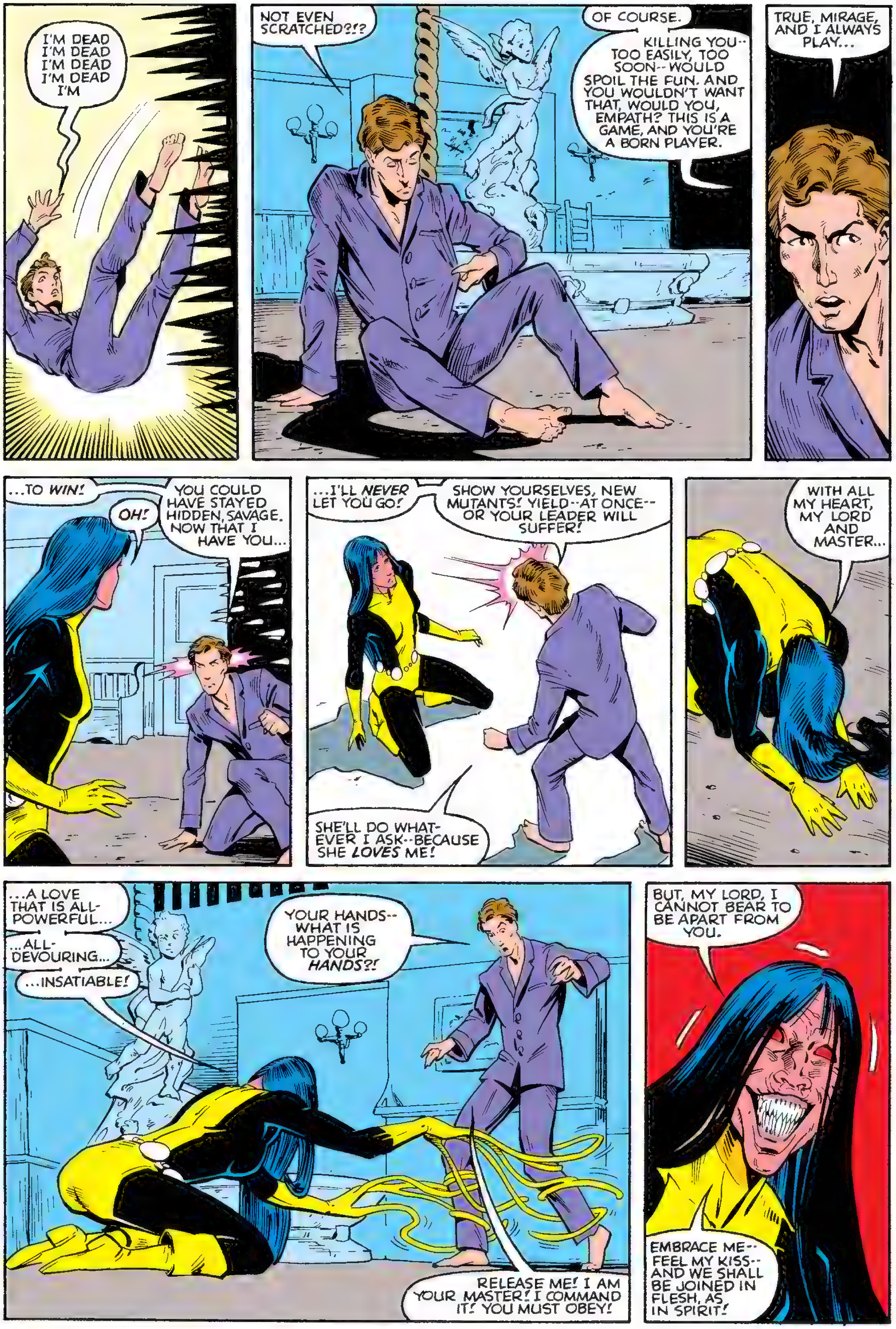

THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY...
SNEAKY BADBOY BED GO BYE-BYE.
HEART-TWISTER GO WITH?
I CAST THE TAROT, AS I DO EVERY NIGHT AFTER EVENING PRAYERS.
THE CARDS FORETOLD GREAT PERIL FACING ONE OF THE HELLIONS.
NOW, TAROT, WE KNOW WHICH.
CATSEYE, SHIFT INTO YOUR FURFORM.
PERHAPS YOUR FELINE SENSES CAN SPOT SOME CLUES?
PHAUGGH-- CHOO!
IEUCKH-- NASTY STINK ALL 'ROUND--SAME AS CATSEYE SCENTED ON MUTANT MAGIKCHILD!
THE NEW MUTANTS MUST HAVE KIDNAPPED EMPATH!
BRAVO FOR THEM!
LET'S GO BACK TO BED AND LEAVE De La ROCHA TO HIS WELL-DESERVED FATE.
WE'RE BETTER OFF WITHOUT HIM.
SPAIN
THAT'S *HIS* STYLE, JETSTREAM--
--NOT OURS.
SO LONG AS HE'S PART OF THE TEAM, WE LOOK OUT FOR HIM.
YOU THINK, THUNDERBIRD, HE'D DO THE SAME FOR US?
NOT THE POINT, BUDDY.
YOU WANT TO SINK TO HIS LEVEL?
*MES AMIS*, SHOULD WE NOT INFORM OUR HEADMISTRESS, THE *WHITE QUEEN*?
SHE'S OFF-CAMPUS, TAROT, OUT OF TOUCH.
BESIDES, I FIGURE WE CAN HANDLE XAVIER'S OUTFIT BY OURSELVES.

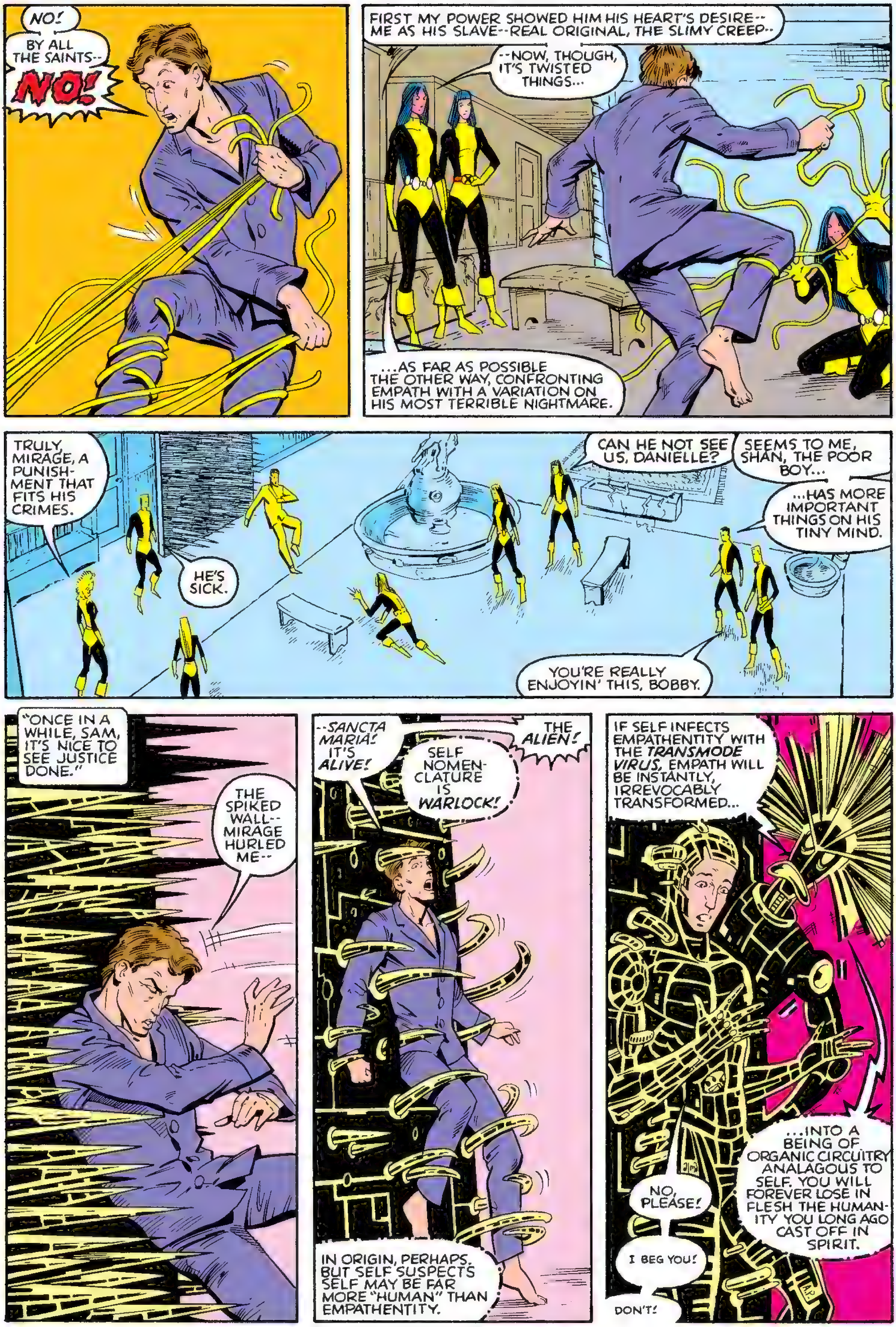

ELSEWHERE...
I...
...I'M...
...ALIVE!
THAT SWORD--I THOUGHT IT CUT ME IN HALF--BUT NOTHING HAPPENED!
THE WITCH-GIRL --ROT HER SOUL--SHE TRICKED ME!
SOMEDAY, SOMEHOW, I SWEAR --I WILL MAKE HER PAY!
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
AM I STILL IN LIMBO?!
COULD MAGIK HAVE HEARD MY THOUGHTS?!!?
MOUNTAINS--AND THE MOON--BUT WHERE?!
NO WAY OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW--IT'S A SHEER DROP!
THIS FEELS LIKE EARTH...
...UNLESS THE WITCH IS CASTING A SPELL TO MAKE ME THINK SO...
...AND I'M REALLY STILL IN HER ACCURSED LIMBO.
IT'S SO DARK.
ARE HER DEMONS WAITING IN THE SHADOWS?!
THROUGH MY HEART RUNS THE BLOOD OF PRINCES--
--I WILL NOT BE AFRAID!
EMMMMMPAAATH!
WHO'S THERE?!
SHOW YOURSELF!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
THE DOOR--CLOSED AND LOCKED BEHIND ME!
THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN, LITTLE MAN...
...NOWHERE TO HIDE.
LEAVE ME ALONE!
MAKE US!

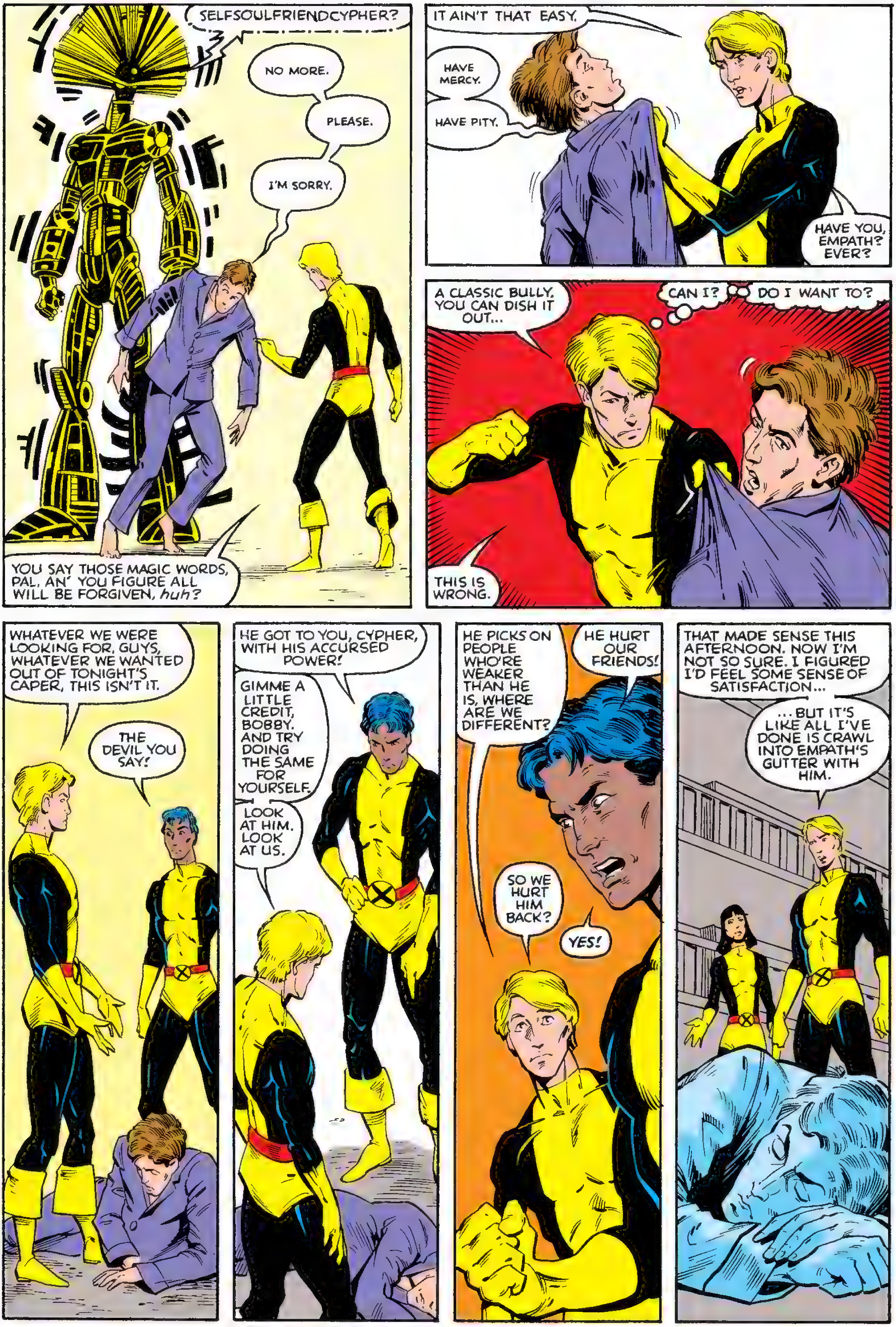

BELOW THE ACADEMY IS A VAST UNDERGROUND COMPLEX WHOSE EXISTENCE--LIKE THAT OF THE HELLIONS THEMSELVES--
--IS KNOWN ONLY TO A SELECT FEW.
NOBODY SAW US SNEAK IN, JET. BUT LET'S NOT PUSH OUR LUCK.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
THE *CYBERIAD* SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO LOCATE MUTANTS, AS IS XAVIER'S *CEREBRO*. I'VE UPLOADED EMPATH'S FILE. IF HE IS ANYWHERE NEARBY...
...THIS SHOULD LOCATE HIM.
MEANWHILE...
FIRST, FIND SOME STAIRS...
...THEN THE DOOR--
--WHAT'S THAT?!
THE FLOOR--GLOWING--I CAN FEEL THE HEAT, EVEN UP HERE!
SANCTISSIMA!
RRRRRUUU KOOM
A VOLCANIC ERUPTION--
--I'LL BE BURNED ALIVE!

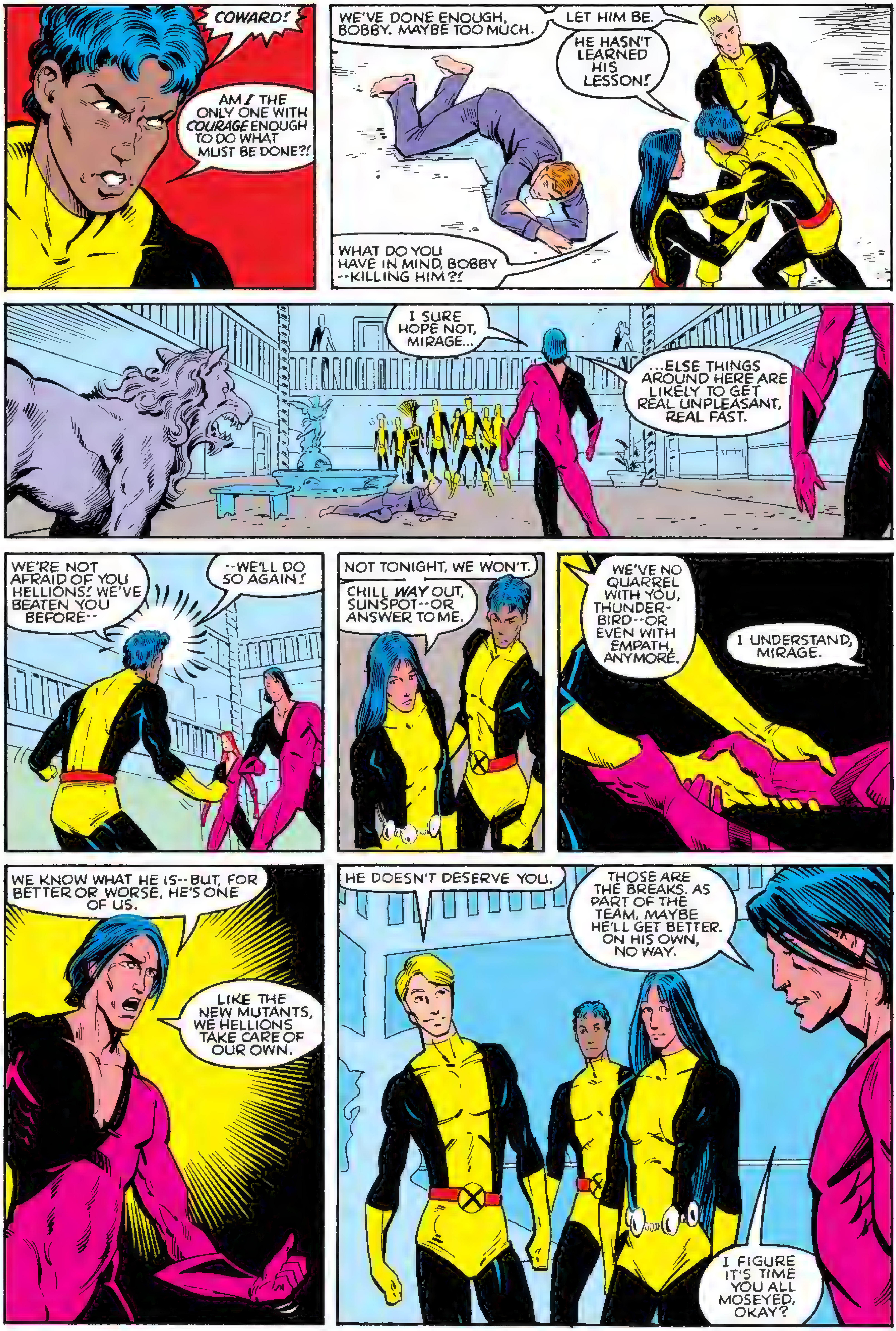

THAT, WORM...
...IS THE VERY LEAST OF YOUR TROUBLES!
A-- DEMON?!!
THE LORD OF DEMONS, MAGGOT--
--AND YOU, EMPATH, ARE MY LATEST PLAYTHING!
NO!
YOU WON'T GET ME!!
BUT WHERE CAN I GO, HOW CAN I ESCAPE-- I TRIPPED!
OHWHWW!
Awwwww--
--POOR LITTLE EMPATH FALL DOWN...
...GO BOO--HOO!
Y-YEH-YOU!?!

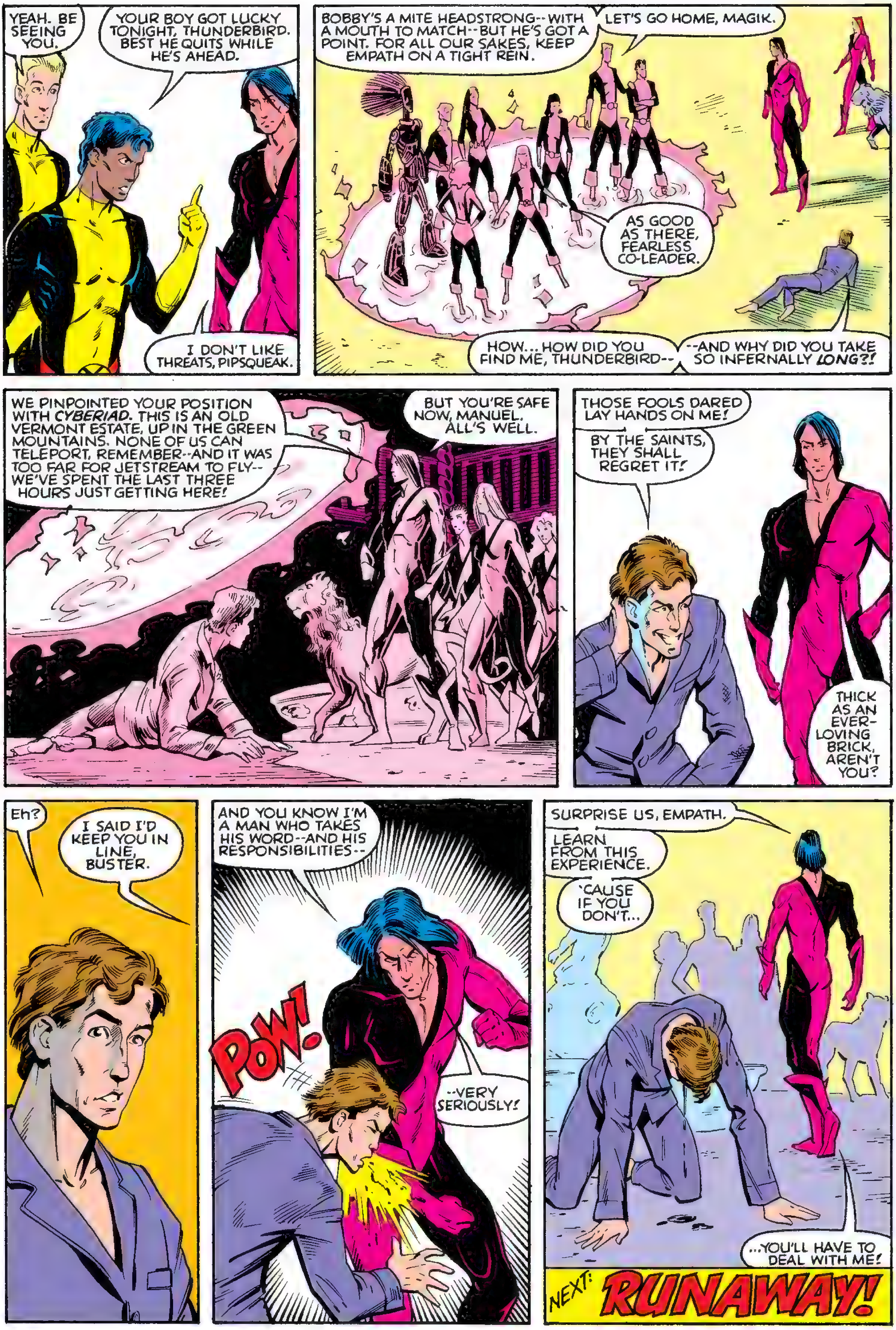

THAT'S RIGHT, HELLION--SUNSPOT!
THINK YOU'LL TWIST MY EMOTIONS, SPANIARD--ENSLAVE ME--CRIPPLE ME--AS YOU HAVE SO MANY OTHERS!?!
NOT A CHANCE!
TAKE HIM AWAY, CANNON-BALL!
MY PLEASURE, PARTNER!
YAIEIEIEEE
WE--SMASHED THROUGH THAT WALL...BUT I WASN'T HURT!
THAT'S RIGHT! CANNONBALL'S POWER PROTECTS WHOMEVER HE CARRIES!
SO LONG AS HE KEEPS HOLD OF ME...
...I'M--SAFE!
BYE, BABE!
HAPPY LANDINGS!
THE WITCH--MAGIK--SHE TELEPORTED HIM AWAY!!
AHAAYRRGH!


I'M DEAD I'M DEAD I'M DEAD I'M DEAD I'M
NOT EVEN SCRATCHED?!?
OF COURSE.
KILLING YOU-- TOO EASILY, TOO SOON-- WOULD SPOIL THE FUN. AND YOU WOULDN'T WANT THAT, WOULD YOU, EMPATH? THIS IS A GAME, AND YOU'RE A BORN PLAYER.
TRUE, MIRAGE, AND I ALWAYS PLAY...
...TO *WIN!*
*OH!*
YOU COULD HAVE STAYED HIDDEN, SAVAGE. NOW THAT I HAVE YOU...
...I'LL *NEVER* LET YOU GO!
SHOW YOURSELVES, NEW MUTANTS! YIELD--AT ONCE-- OR YOUR LEADER WILL SUFFER!
SHE'LL DO WHAT-EVER I ASK--BECAUSE SHE *LOVES* ME!
WITH ALL MY HEART, MY LORD AND MASTER...
...A LOVE THAT IS ALL-POWERFUL...
...ALL-DEVOURING...
...INSATIABLE!
YOUR HANDS-- WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOUR *HANDS?!*
RELEASE ME! I AM YOUR MASTER! I COMMAND IT! YOU MUST OBEY!
BUT, MY LORD, I CANNOT BEAR TO BE APART FROM YOU.
EMBRACE ME-- FEEL MY KISS-- AND WE SHALL BE JOINED IN FLESH, AS IN SPIRIT!


NO!
BY ALL THE SAINTS--
NO!
FIRST MY POWER SHOWED HIM HIS HEART'S DESIRE-- ME AS HIS SLAVE--REAL ORIGINAL, THE SLIMY CREEP--
--NOW, THOUGH, IT'S TWISTED THINGS...
...AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THE OTHER WAY, CONFRONTING EMPATH WITH A VARIATION ON HIS MOST TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE.
TRULY, MIRAGE, A PUNISHMENT THAT FITS HIS CRIMES.
HE'S SICK.
CAN HE NOT SEE US, DANIELLE?
SEEMS TO ME, SHAN, THE POOR BOY...
...HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS ON HIS TINY MIND.
YOU'RE REALLY ENJOYIN' THIS, BOBBY.
"ONCE IN A WHILE, SAM, IT'S NICE TO SEE JUSTICE DONE."
THE SPIKED WALL-- MIRAGE HURLED ME--
--SANCTA MARIA! IT'S ALIVE!
SELF NOMENCLATURE IS WARLOCK!
THE ALIEN!
IN ORIGIN, PERHAPS. BUT SELF SUSPECTS SELF MAY BE FAR MORE "HUMAN" THAN EMPATHENTITY.
IF SELF INFECTS EMPATHENTITY WITH THE TRANSMODE VIRUS, EMPATH WILL BE INSTANTLY, IRREVOCABLY TRANSFORMED...
...INTO A BEING OF ORGANIC CIRCUITRY ANALAGOUS TO SELF. YOU WILL FOREVER LOSE IN FLESH THE HUMANITY YOU LONG AGO CAST OFF IN SPIRIT.
NO, PLEASE!
I BEG YOU!
DON'T!


SELFSOULFRIENDCYPHER?
NO MORE.
PLEASE.
I'M SORRY.
YOU SAY THOSE MAGIC WORDS, PAL, AN' YOU FIGURE ALL WILL BE FORGIVEN, *huh?*
IT AIN'T THAT EASY.
HAVE MERCY.
HAVE PITY.
HAVE YOU, EMPATH? EVER?
A CLASSIC BULLY. YOU CAN DISH IT OUT...
CAN I?
DO I WANT TO?
THIS IS WRONG.
WHATEVER WE WERE LOOKING FOR, GUYS, WHATEVER WE WANTED OUT OF TONIGHT'S CAPER, THIS ISN'T IT.
THE DEVIL YOU SAY!
HE GOT TO YOU, CYPHER, WITH HIS ACCURSED POWER!
GIMME A LITTLE CREDIT, BOBBY. AND TRY DOING THE SAME FOR YOURSELF.
LOOK AT HIM. LOOK AT US.
HE PICKS ON PEOPLE WHO'RE WEAKER THAN HE IS, WHERE ARE WE DIFFERENT?
HE HURT OUR FRIENDS!
SO WE HURT HIM BACK?
YES!
THAT MADE SENSE THIS AFTERNOON. NOW I'M NOT SO SURE. I FIGURED I'D FEEL SOME SENSE OF SATISFACTION...
...BUT IT'S LIKE ALL I'VE DONE IS CRAWL INTO EMPATH'S GUTTER WITH HIM.


COWARD!
AM I THE ONLY ONE WITH *COURAGE* ENOUGH TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE?!
WE'VE DONE ENOUGH, BOBBY. MAYBE TOO MUCH.
LET HIM BE.
HE HASN'T LEARNED HIS LESSON!
WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND, BOBBY --KILLING HIM?!
I SURE HOPE NOT, MIRAGE...
...ELSE THINGS AROUND HERE ARE LIKELY TO GET REAL UNPLEASANT, REAL FAST.
WE'RE NOT AFRAID OF YOU HELLIONS! WE'VE BEATEN YOU BEFORE--
--WE'LL DO SO AGAIN!
NOT TONIGHT, WE WON'T.
CHILL *WAY* OUT, SUNSPOT--OR ANSWER TO ME.
WE'VE NO QUARREL WITH YOU, THUNDERBIRD--OR EVEN WITH EMPATH, ANYMORE.
I UNDERSTAND, MIRAGE.
WE KNOW WHAT HE IS--BUT, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HE'S ONE OF US.
LIKE THE NEW MUTANTS, WE HELLIONS TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN.
HE DOESN'T DESERVE YOU.
THOSE ARE THE BREAKS. AS PART OF THE TEAM, MAYBE HE'LL GET BETTER. ON HIS OWN, NO WAY.
I FIGURE IT'S TIME YOU ALL MOSEYED, OKAY?


YEAH. BE SEEING YOU.
YOUR BOY GOT LUCKY TONIGHT, THUNDERBIRD. BEST HE QUITS WHILE HE'S AHEAD.
I DON'T LIKE THREATS, PIPSQUEAK.
BOBBY'S A MITE HEADSTRONG--WITH A MOUTH TO MATCH--BUT HE'S GOT A POINT. FOR ALL OUR SAKES, KEEP EMPATH ON A TIGHT REIN.
LET'S GO HOME, MAGIK.
AS GOOD AS THERE, FEARLESS CO-LEADER.
HOW... HOW DID YOU FIND ME, THUNDERBIRD--
--AND WHY DID YOU TAKE SO INFERNALLY *LONG?!*
WE PINPOINTED YOUR POSITION WITH *CYBERIAD*. THIS IS AN OLD VERMONT ESTATE, UP IN THE GREEN MOUNTAINS. NONE OF US CAN TELEPORT, REMEMBER--AND IT WAS TOO FAR FOR JETSTREAM TO FLY--WE'VE SPENT THE LAST THREE HOURS JUST GETTING HERE!
BUT YOU'RE SAFE NOW, MANUEL. ALL'S WELL.
THOSE FOOLS DARED LAY HANDS ON ME!
BY THE SAINTS, THEY SHALL REGRET IT!
THICK AS AN EVER-LOVING BRICK, AREN'T YOU?
Eh?
I SAID I'D KEEP YOU IN LINE, BUSTER.
AND YOU KNOW I'M A MAN WHO TAKES HIS WORD--AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES--
POW!
--VERY SERIOUSLY!
SURPRISE US, EMPATH.
LEARN FROM THIS EXPERIENCE.
'CAUSE IF YOU DON'T...
...YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH ME!
NEXT: RUNAWAY!

MARVEL®
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# THE·NEW
# MUTANTS®

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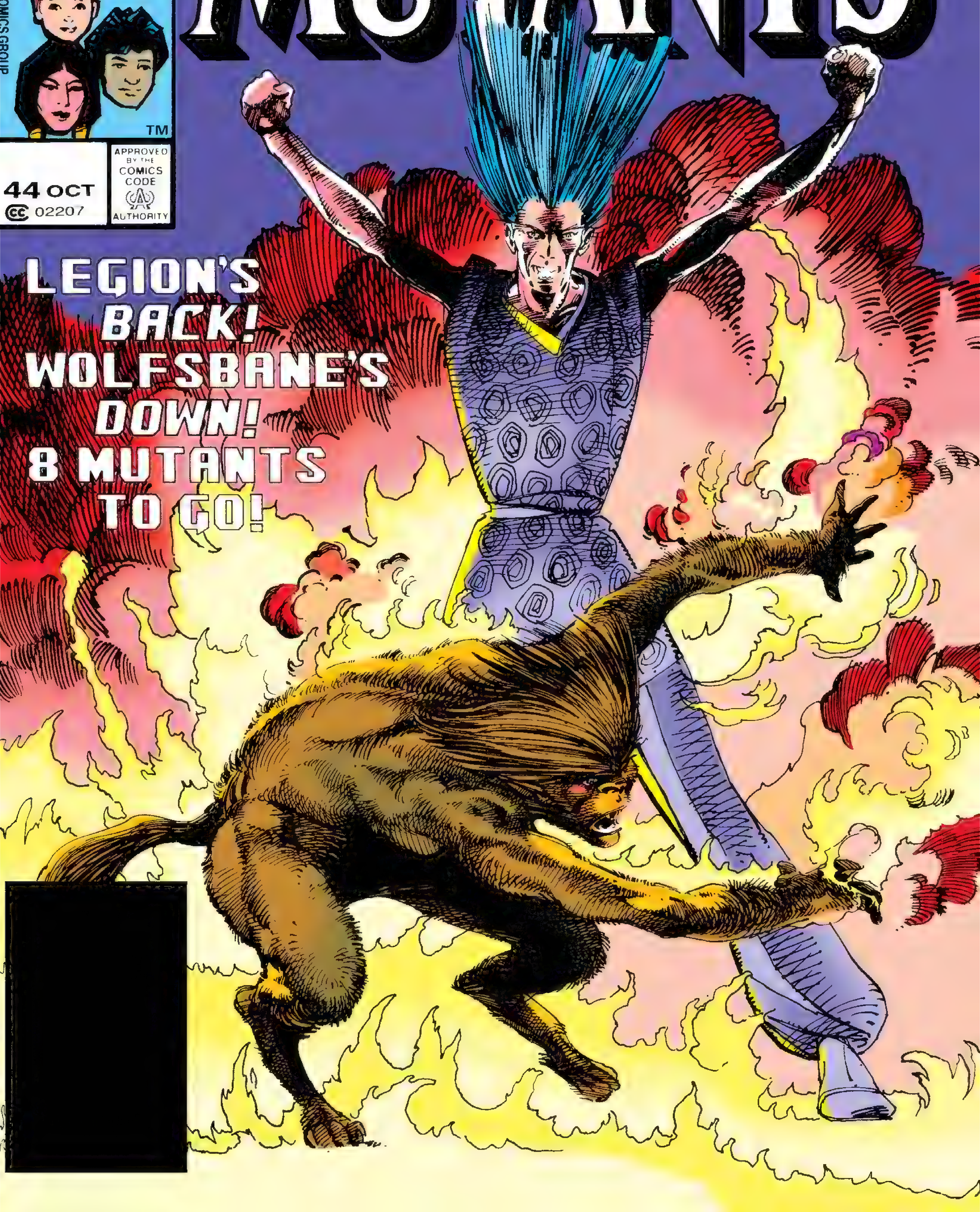
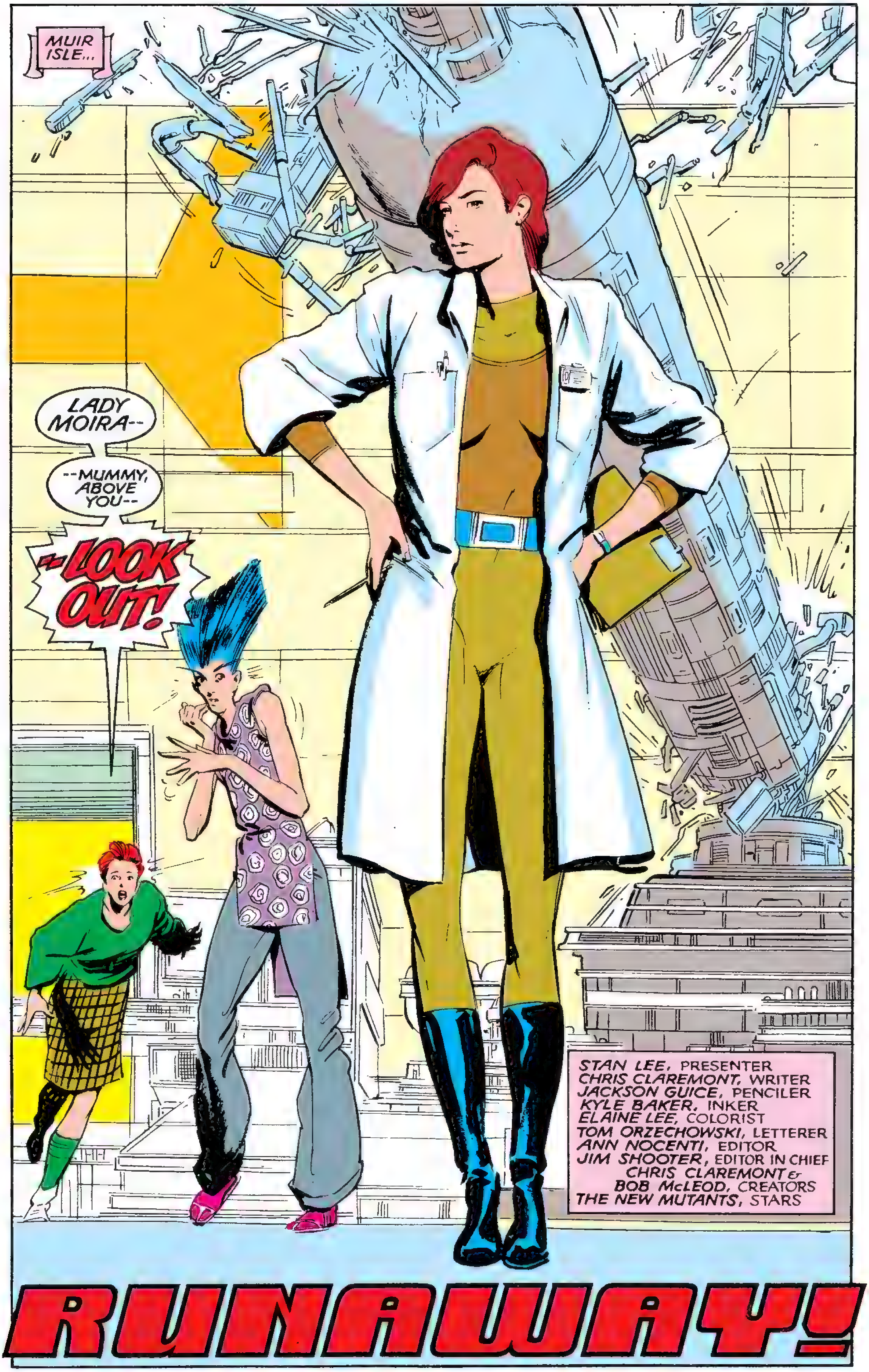

LEGION'S *BACK!* WOLFSBANE'S *DOWN!* 8 MUTANTS TO GO!

[redacted]


MUIR ISLE...
LADY MOIRA--
--MUMMY, ABOVE YOU--
--LOOK OUT!
STAN LEE, PRESENTER
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER
JACKSON GUICE, PENCILER
KYLE BAKER, INKER
ELAINE LEE, COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF
CHRIS CLAREMONT & BOB McLEOD, CREATORS
THE NEW MUTANTS, STARS
RUNAWAY!

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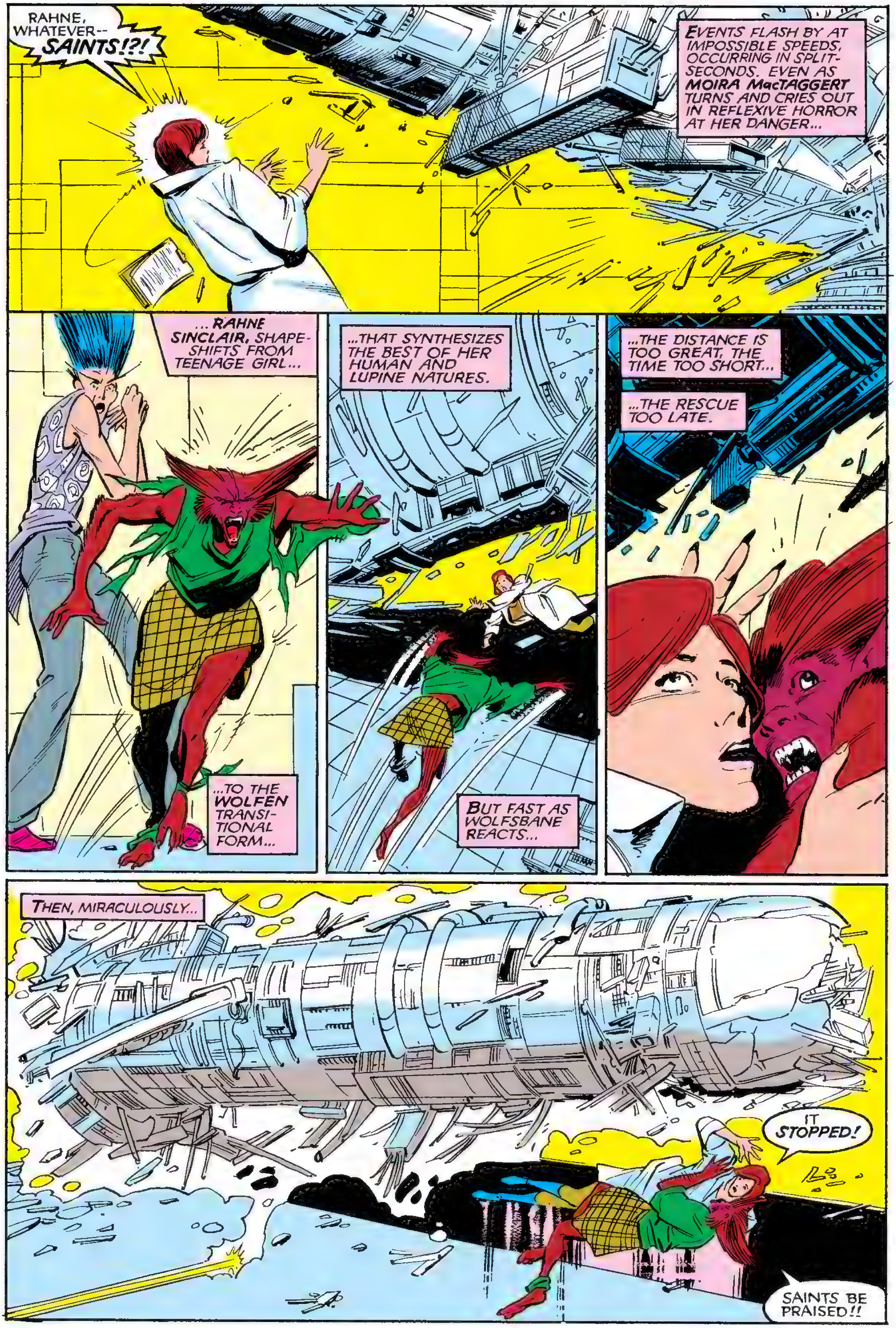
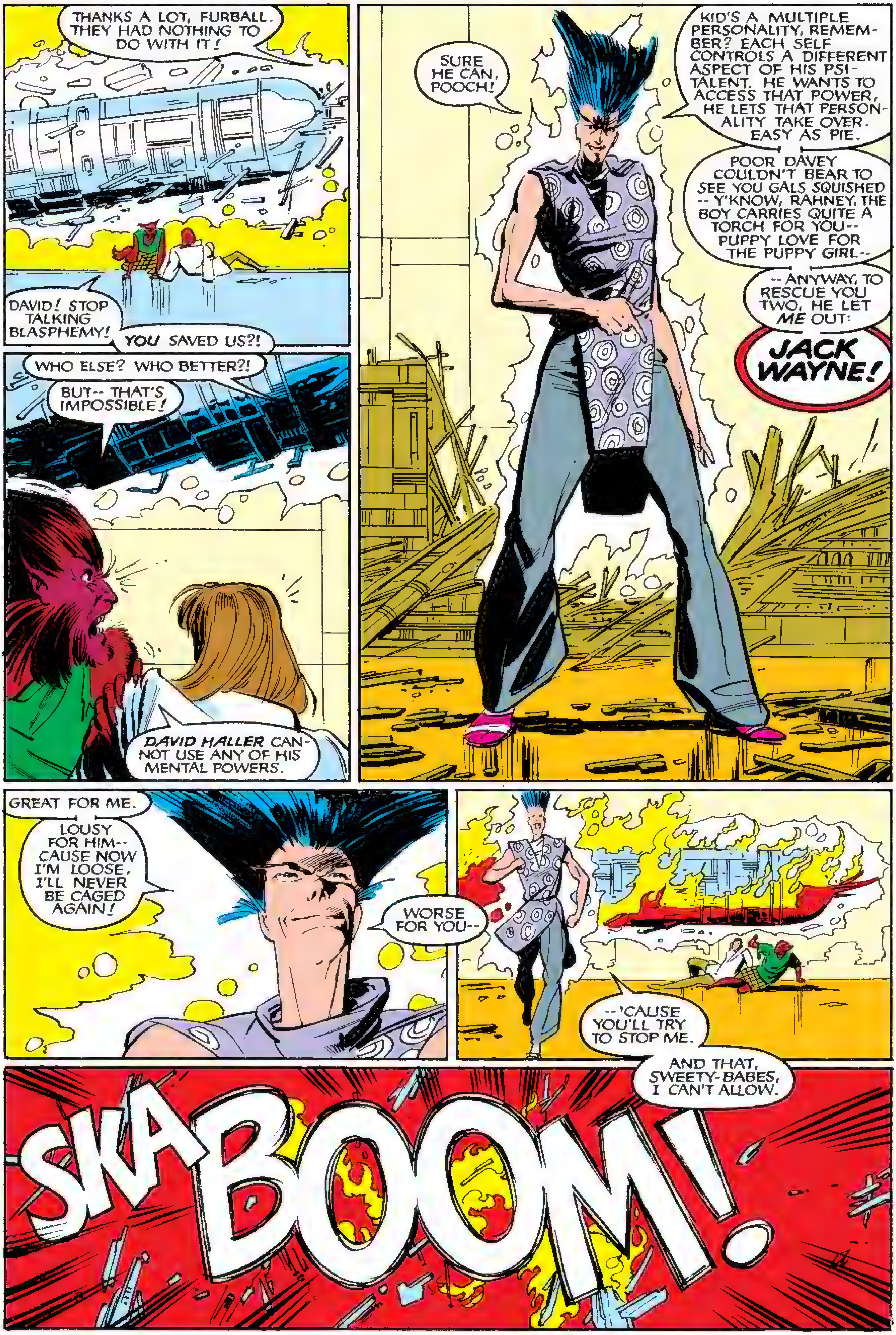
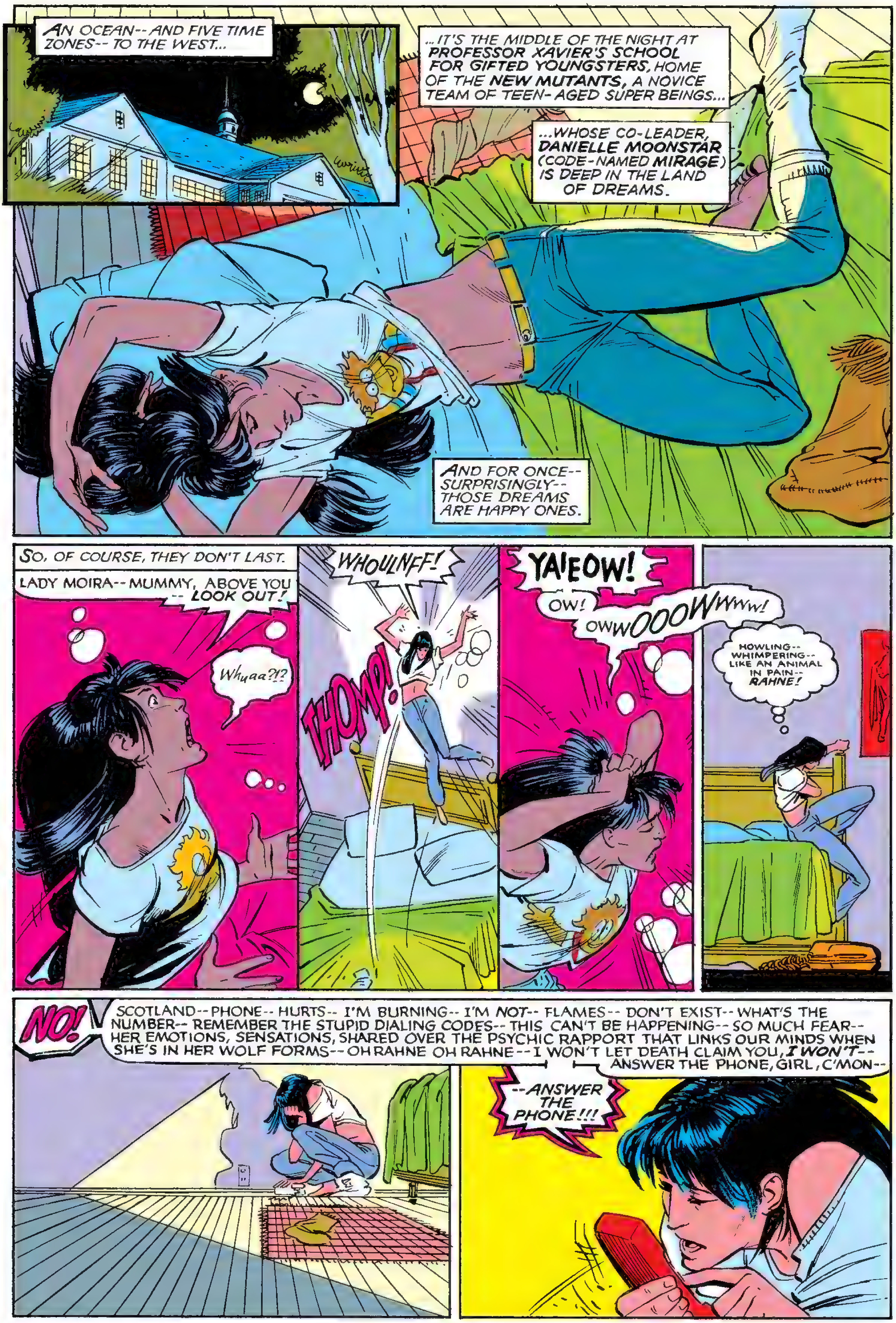
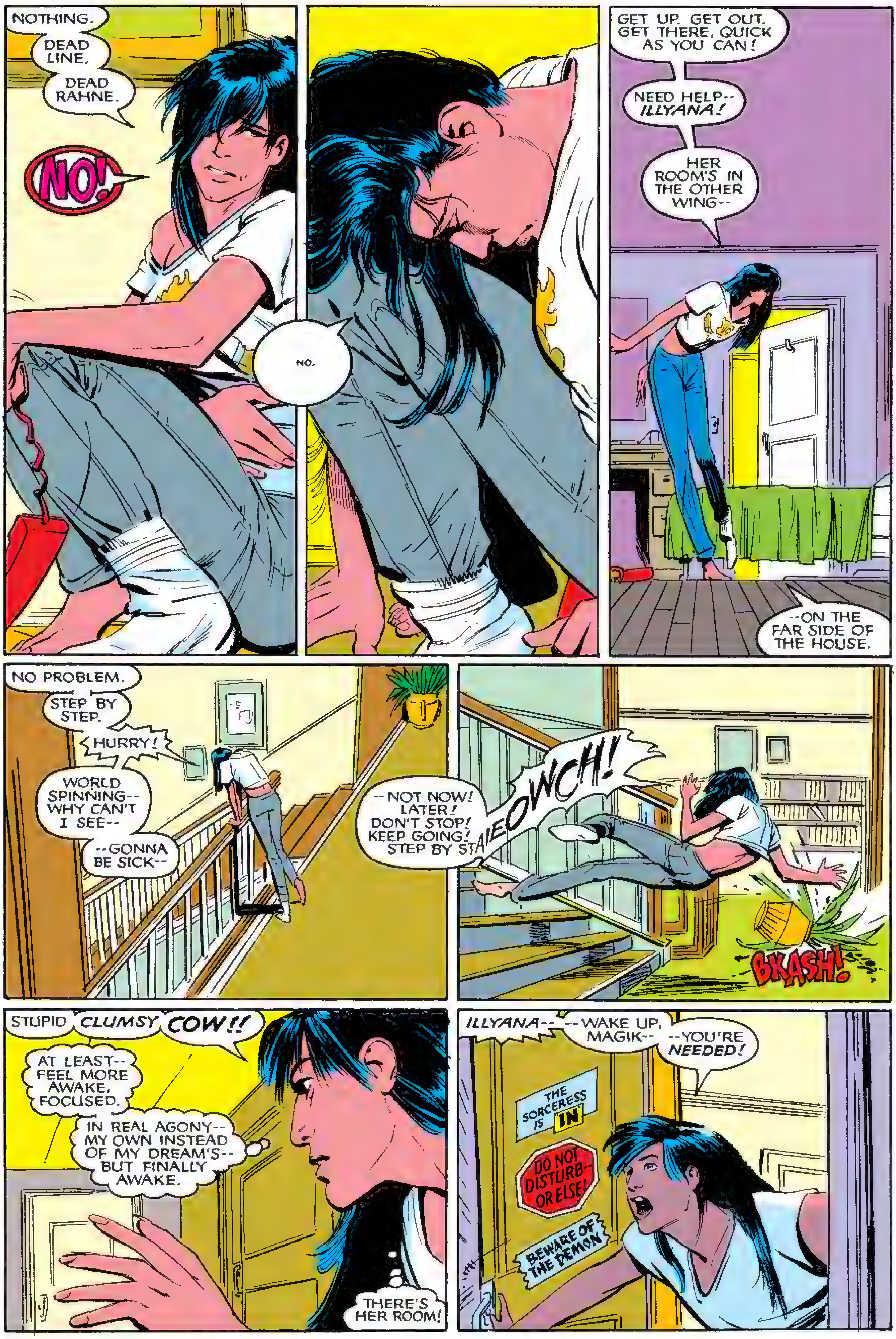
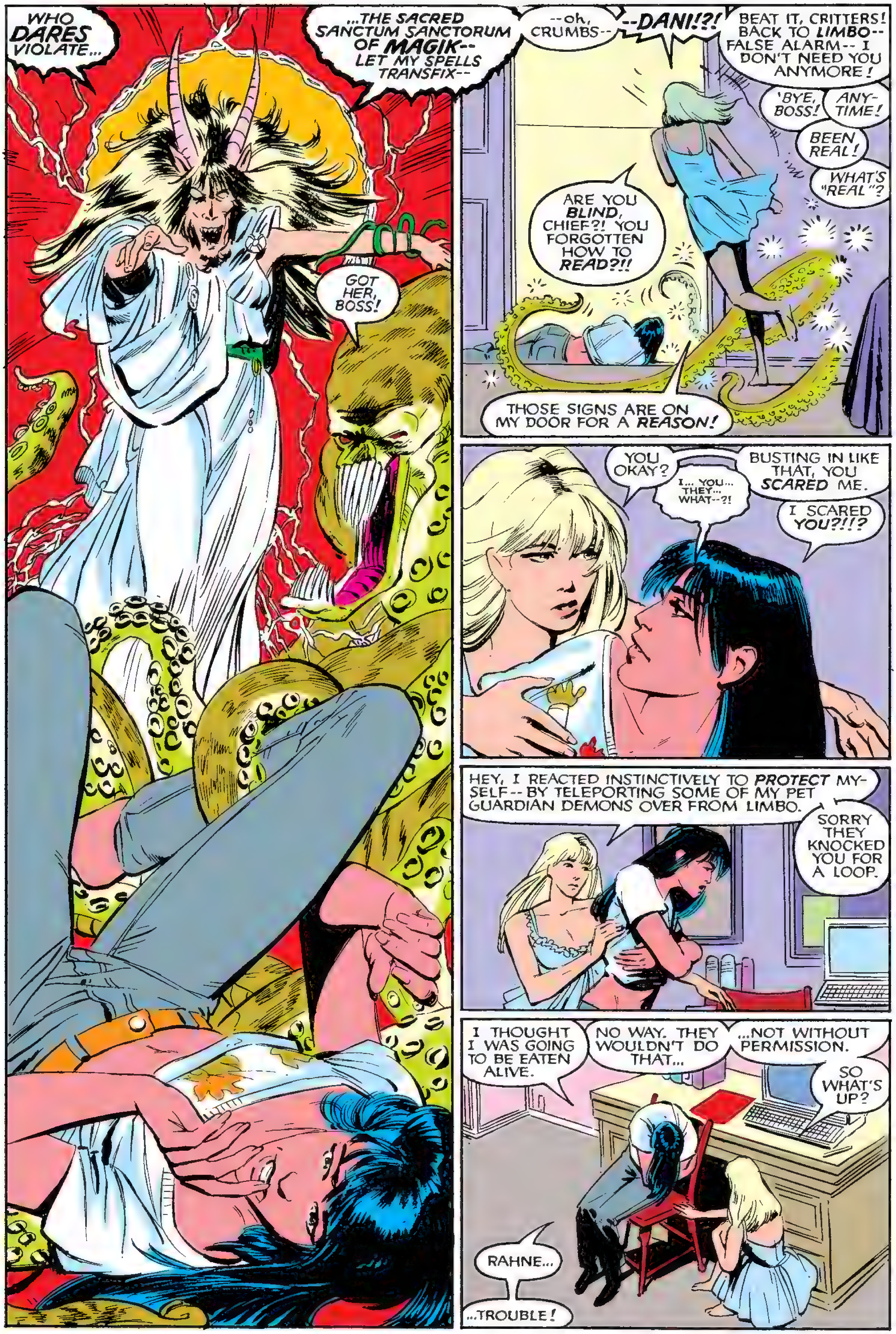
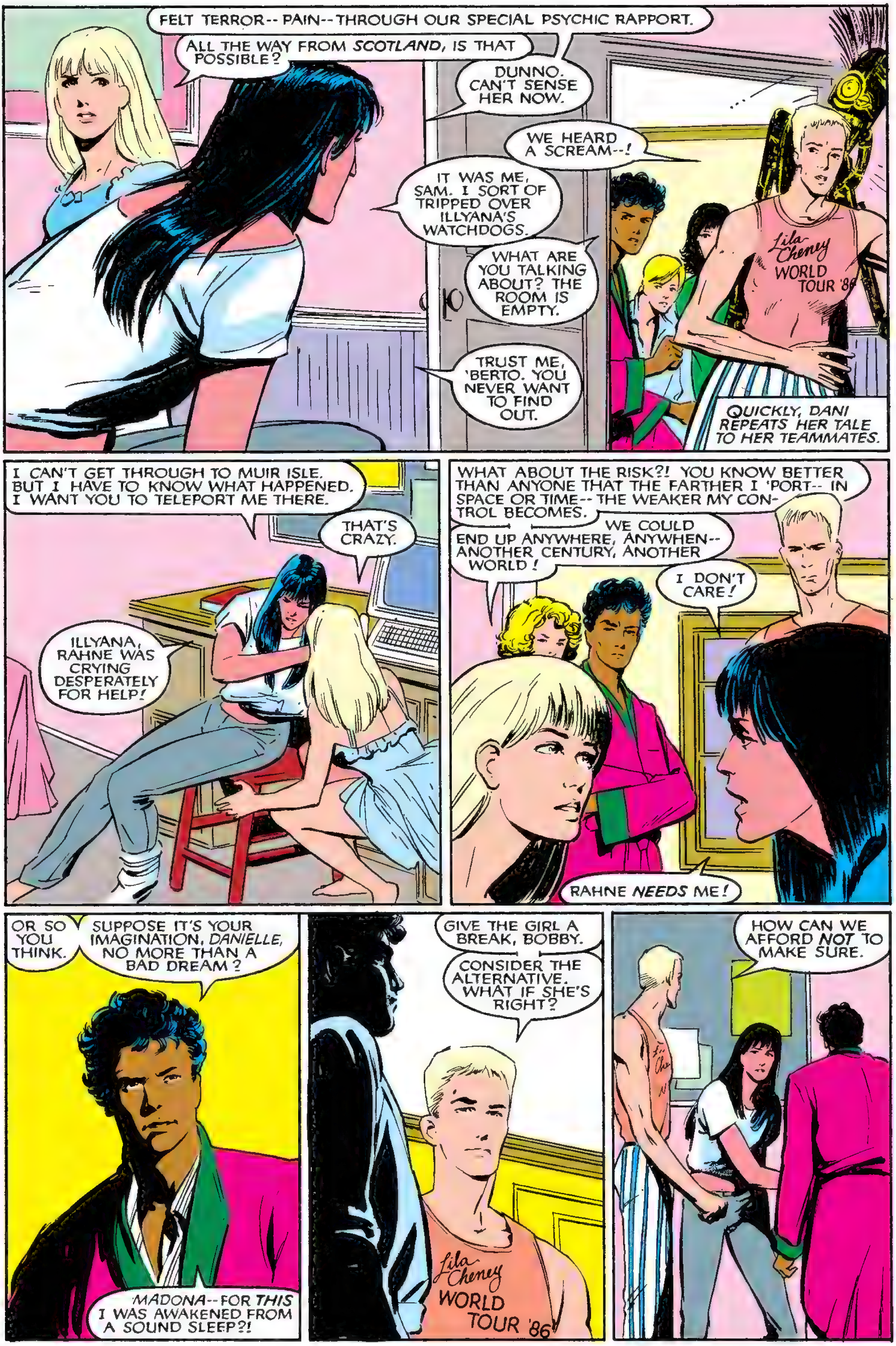

RAHNE, WHATEVER-- SAINTS!?!
EVENTS FLASH BY AT IMPOSSIBLE SPEEDS, OCCURRING IN SPLIT-SECONDS. EVEN AS **MOIRA MacTAGGERT** TURNS AND CRIES OUT IN REFLEXIVE HORROR AT HER DANGER...
... **RAHNE SINCLAIR**, SHAPE-SHIFTS FROM TEENAGE GIRL...
...TO THE **WOLFEN** TRANSITIONAL FORM...
...THAT SYNTHESIZES THE BEST OF HER HUMAN AND LUPINE NATURES.
BUT FAST AS WOLFSBANE REACTS...
...THE DISTANCE IS TOO GREAT, THE TIME TOO SHORT...
...THE RESCUE TOO LATE.
THEN, MIRACULOUSLY...
IT STOPPED!
SAINTS BE PRAISED!!

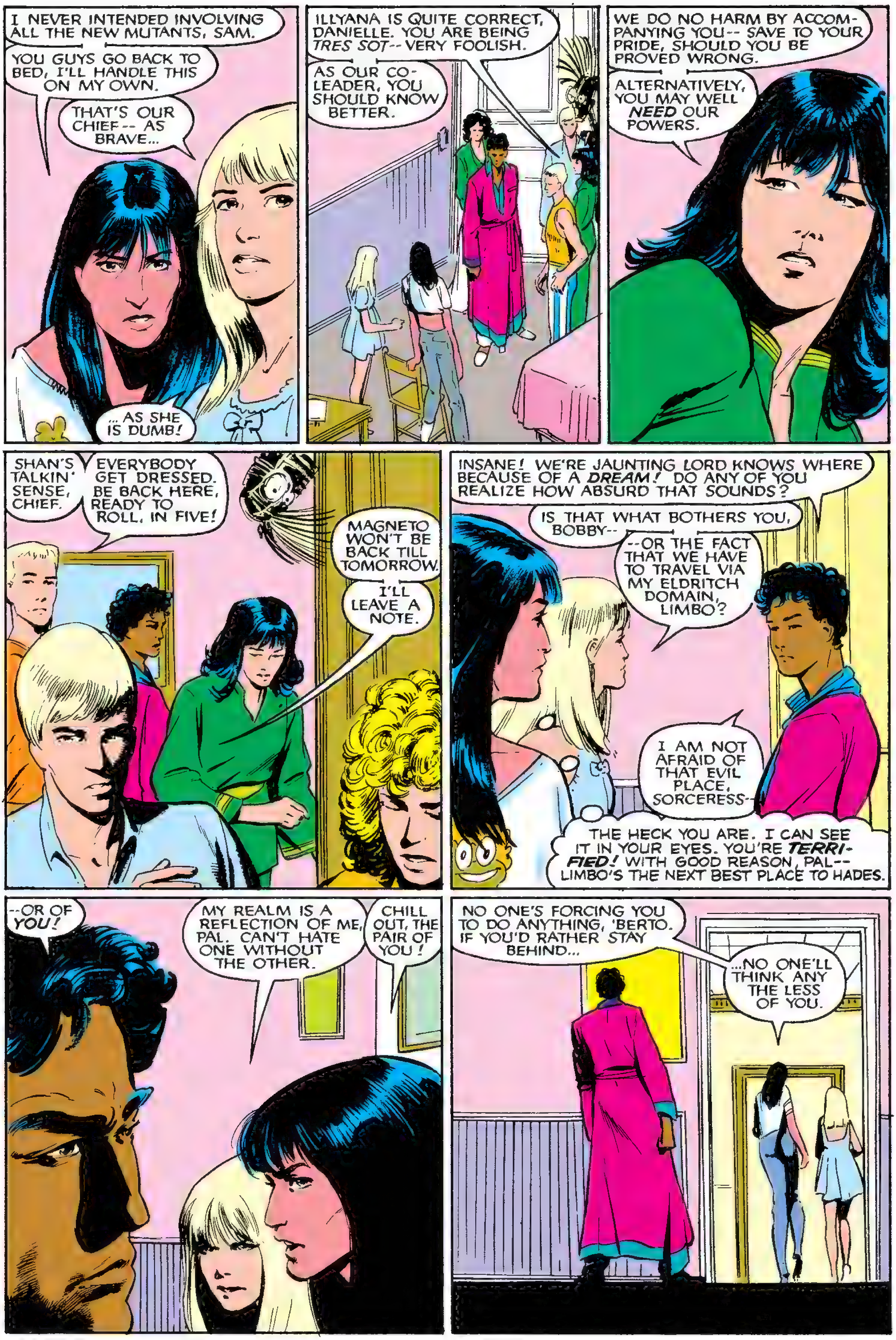

THANKS A LOT, FURBALL. THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!
DAVID! STOP TALKING BLASPHEMY!
*YOU* SAVED US?!
WHO ELSE? WHO BETTER?!
BUT-- THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
*DAVID HALLER* CANNOT USE ANY OF HIS MENTAL POWERS.
SURE HE CAN, POOCH!
KID'S A MULTIPLE PERSONALITY, REMEMBER? EACH SELF CONTROLS A DIFFERENT ASPECT OF HIS PSI-TALENT. HE WANTS TO ACCESS THAT POWER, HE LETS THAT PERSONALITY TAKE OVER. EASY AS PIE.
POOR DAVEY COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE YOU GALS SQUISHED -- Y'KNOW, RAHNEY, THE BOY CARRIES QUITE A TORCH FOR YOU-- PUPPY LOVE FOR THE PUPPY GIRL--
-- ANYWAY, TO RESCUE YOU TWO, HE LET *ME* OUT:
*JACK WAYNE!*
GREAT FOR ME.
LOUSY FOR HIM-- CAUSE NOW I'M LOOSE, I'LL NEVER BE CAGED AGAIN!
WORSE FOR YOU--
--'CAUSE YOU'LL TRY TO STOP ME.
AND THAT, SWEETY-BABES, I CAN'T ALLOW.
SKA BOOM!

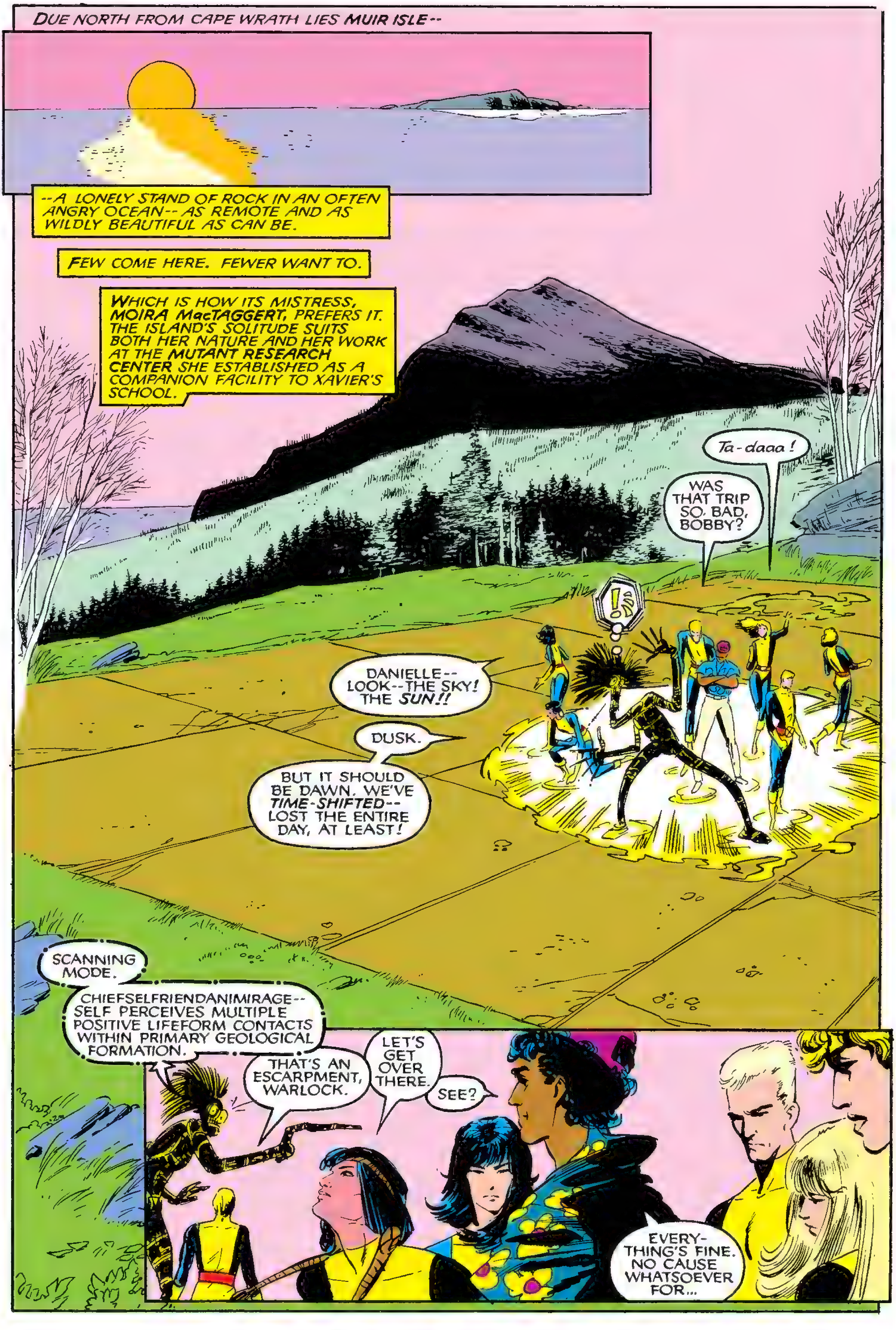

AN OCEAN-- AND FIVE TIME ZONES-- TO THE WEST...
...IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AT **PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS**, HOME OF THE **NEW MUTANTS**, A NOVICE TEAM OF TEEN-AGED SUPER BEINGS...
...WHOSE CO-LEADER, **DANIELLE MOONSTAR** (CODE-NAMED **MIRAGE**) IS DEEP IN THE LAND OF DREAMS.
AND FOR ONCE-- SURPRISINGLY-- THOSE DREAMS ARE HAPPY ONES.
SO, OF COURSE, THEY DON'T LAST.
LADY MOIRA-- MUMMY, ABOVE YOU -- *LOOK OUT!*
Whuaa?!?
WHOULNFF!
THOMP!
YA!EOW!
OW!
OWWOOOWWWW!
HOWLING-- WHIMPERING-- LIKE AN ANIMAL IN PAIN-- **RAHNE!**
NO!
SCOTLAND-- PHONE-- HURTS-- I'M BURNING-- I'M *NOT*-- FLAMES-- DON'T EXIST-- WHAT'S THE NUMBER-- REMEMBER THE STUPID DIALING CODES-- THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING-- SO MUCH FEAR-- HER EMOTIONS, SENSATIONS, SHARED OVER THE PSYCHIC RAPPORT THAT LINKS OUR MINDS WHEN SHE'S IN HER WOLF FORMS-- OH RAHNE OH RAHNE-- I WON'T LET DEATH CLAIM YOU, *I WON'T*-- ANSWER THE PHONE, GIRL, C'MON--
--ANSWER THE PHONE!!!

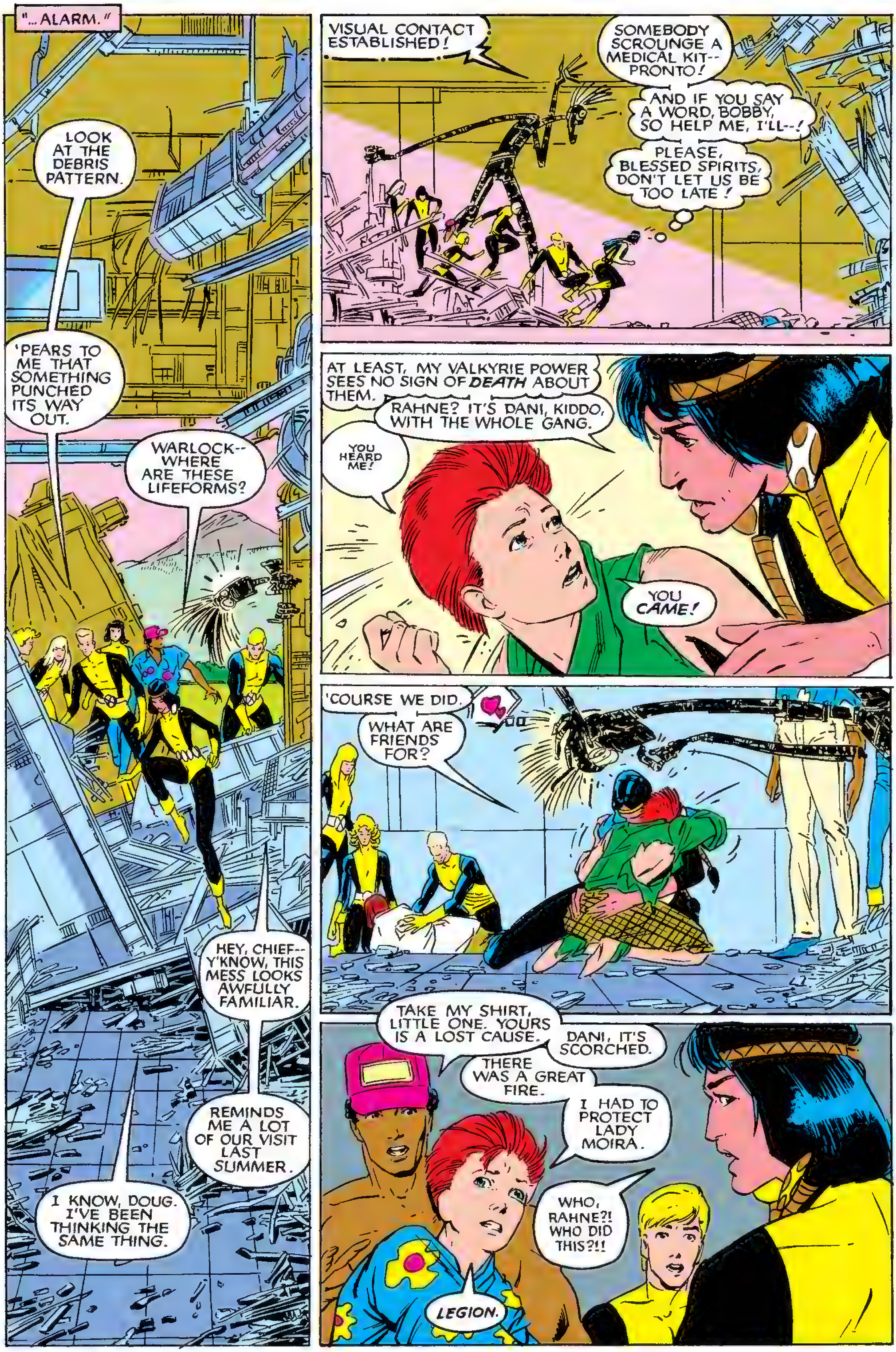

NOTHING.
DEAD LINE.
DEAD RAHNE.
NO!
NO.
GET UP. GET OUT. GET THERE, QUICK AS YOU CAN!
NEED HELP-- ILLYANA!
HER ROOM'S IN THE OTHER WING--
--ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE HOUSE.
NO PROBLEM.
STEP BY STEP.
HURRY!
WORLD SPINNING-- WHY CAN'T I SEE--
--GONNA BE SICK--
--NOT NOW! LATER! DON'T STOP! KEEP GOING! STEP BY STA
OWCH!
BKASH!
STUPID CLUMSY COW!!
AT LEAST-- FEEL MORE AWAKE, FOCUSED.
IN REAL AGONY-- MY OWN INSTEAD OF MY DREAM'S-- BUT FINALLY AWAKE.
THERE'S HER ROOM!
ILLYANA--
--WAKE UP, MAGIK--
--YOU'RE NEEDED!
THE SORCERESS IS IN
DO NOT DISTURB-- OR ELSE!
BEWARE OF THE DEMON

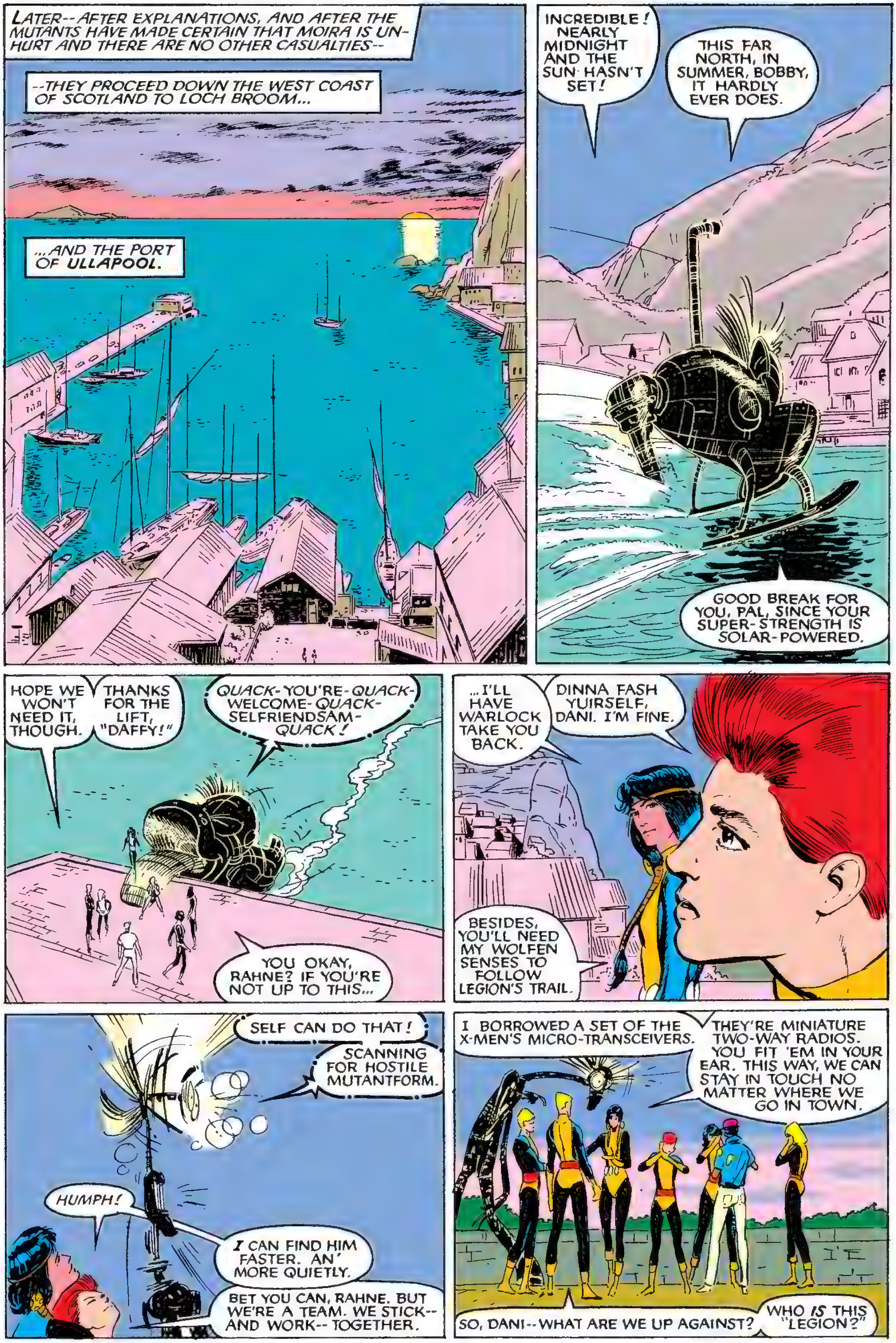

WHO DARES VIOLATE...
...THE SACRED SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF MAGIK-- LET MY SPELLS TRANSFIX--
GOT HER, BOSS!
--oh, CRUMBS--
--DANI!?!
BEAT IT, CRITTERS! BACK TO LIMBO-- FALSE ALARM-- I DON'T NEED YOU ANYMORE!
'BYE, BOSS!
ANY-TIME!
BEEN REAL!
WHAT'S "REAL"?
ARE YOU BLIND, CHIEF?! YOU FORGOTTEN HOW TO READ?!!
THOSE SIGNS ARE ON MY DOOR FOR A REASON!
YOU OKAY?
I... YOU... THEY... WHAT--?!
BUSTING IN LIKE THAT, YOU SCARED ME.
I SCARED YOU?!!?
HEY, I REACTED INSTINCTIVELY TO PROTECT MYSELF-- BY TELEPORTING SOME OF MY PET GUARDIAN DEMONS OVER FROM LIMBO.
SORRY THEY KNOCKED YOU FOR A LOOP.
I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO BE EATEN ALIVE.
NO WAY. THEY WOULDN'T DO THAT...
...NOT WITHOUT PERMISSION.
SO WHAT'S UP?
RAHNE...
...TROUBLE!

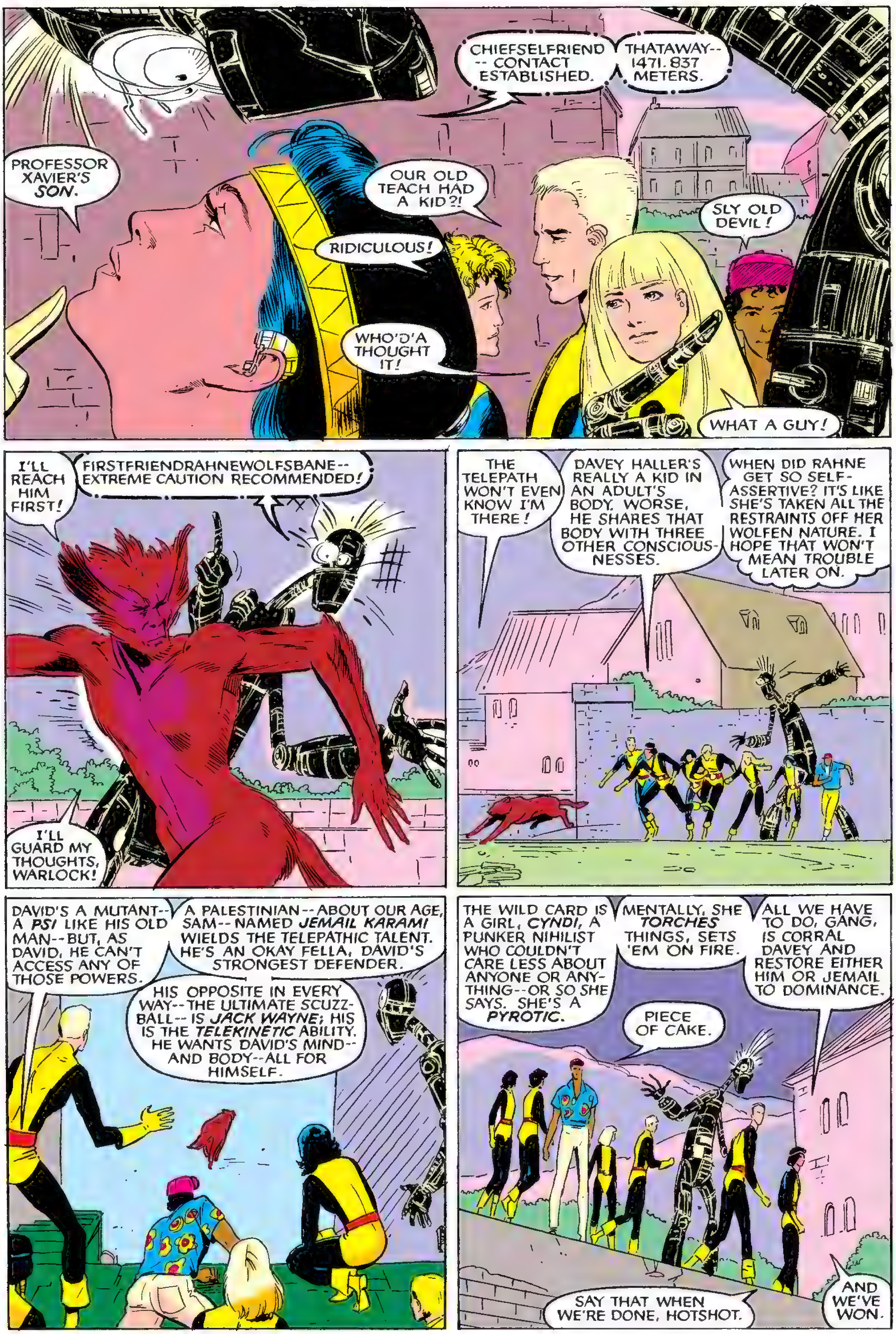

FELT TERROR-- PAIN--THROUGH OUR SPECIAL PSYCHIC RAPPORT.
ALL THE WAY FROM *SCOTLAND,* IS THAT POSSIBLE?
DUNNO. CAN'T SENSE HER NOW.
WE HEARD A SCREAM--!
IT WAS ME, SAM. I SORT OF TRIPPED OVER ILLYANA'S WATCHDOGS.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THE ROOM IS EMPTY.
TRUST ME, 'BERTO. YOU NEVER WANT TO FIND OUT.
QUICKLY, DANI REPEATS HER TALE TO HER TEAMMATES.
Lila Cheney WORLD TOUR '86
I CAN'T GET THROUGH TO MUIR ISLE. BUT I HAVE TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. I WANT YOU TO TELEPORT ME THERE.
THAT'S CRAZY.
ILLYANA, RAHNE WAS CRYING DESPERATELY FOR HELP!
WHAT ABOUT THE RISK?! YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE THAT THE FARTHER I 'PORT-- IN SPACE OR TIME-- THE WEAKER MY CONTROL BECOMES.
WE COULD END UP ANYWHERE, ANYWHEN-- ANOTHER CENTURY, ANOTHER WORLD!
I DON'T CARE!
RAHNE *NEEDS* ME!
OR SO YOU THINK.
SUPPOSE IT'S YOUR IMAGINATION, *DANIELLE,* NO MORE THAN A BAD DREAM?
*MADONA*--FOR *THIS* I WAS AWAKENED FROM A SOUND SLEEP?!
GIVE THE GIRL A BREAK, BOBBY.
CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE. WHAT IF SHE'S RIGHT?
Lila Cheney WORLD TOUR '86
HOW CAN WE AFFORD *NOT* TO MAKE SURE.

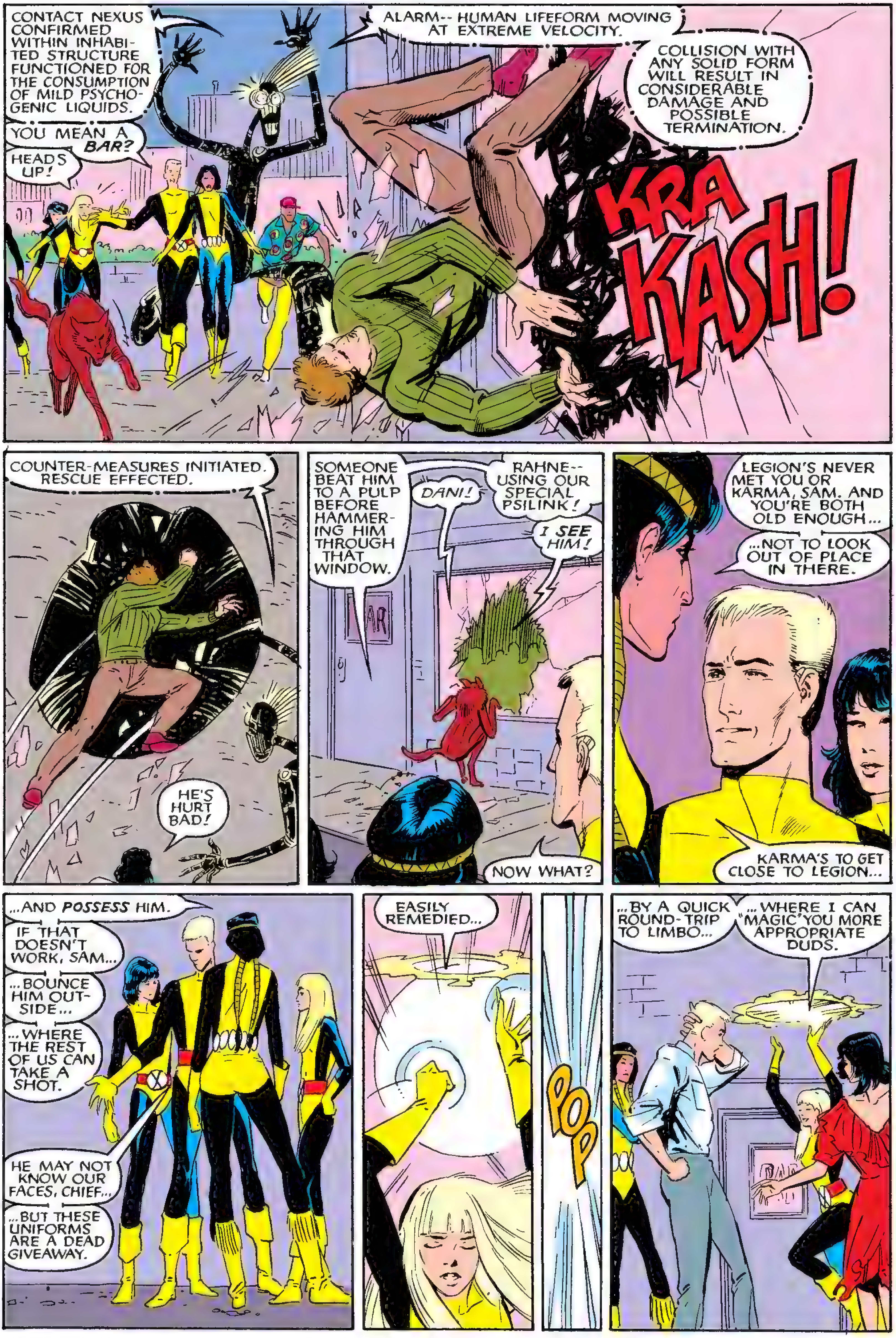

I NEVER INTENDED INVOLVING ALL THE NEW MUTANTS, SAM.
YOU GUYS GO BACK TO BED, I'LL HANDLE THIS ON MY OWN.
THAT'S OUR CHIEF -- AS BRAVE...
...AS SHE IS DUMB!
ILLYANA IS QUITE CORRECT, DANIELLE. YOU ARE BEING *TRES SOT* -- VERY FOOLISH.
AS OUR CO-LEADER, YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER.
WE DO NO HARM BY ACCOMPANYING YOU -- SAVE TO YOUR PRIDE, SHOULD YOU BE PROVED WRONG.
ALTERNATIVELY, YOU MAY WELL *NEED* OUR POWERS.
SHAN'S TALKIN' SENSE, CHIEF.
EVERYBODY GET DRESSED. BE BACK HERE, READY TO ROLL, IN FIVE!
MAGNETO WON'T BE BACK TILL TOMORROW.
I'LL LEAVE A NOTE.
INSANE! WE'RE JAUNTING LORD KNOWS WHERE BECAUSE OF A *DREAM!* DO ANY OF YOU REALIZE HOW ABSURD THAT SOUNDS?
IS THAT WHAT BOTHERS YOU, BOBBY--
--OR THE FACT THAT WE HAVE TO TRAVEL VIA MY ELDRITCH DOMAIN, LIMBO?
I AM NOT AFRAID OF THAT EVIL PLACE, SORCERESS--
THE HECK YOU ARE. I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES. YOU'RE *TERRIFIED!* WITH GOOD REASON, PAL-- LIMBO'S THE NEXT BEST PLACE TO HADES.
--OR OF *YOU!*
MY REALM IS A REFLECTION OF ME, PAL. CAN'T HATE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER.
CHILL OUT, THE PAIR OF YOU!
NO ONE'S FORCING YOU TO DO ANYTHING, 'BERTO. IF YOU'D RATHER STAY BEHIND...
...NO ONE'LL THINK ANY THE LESS OF YOU.

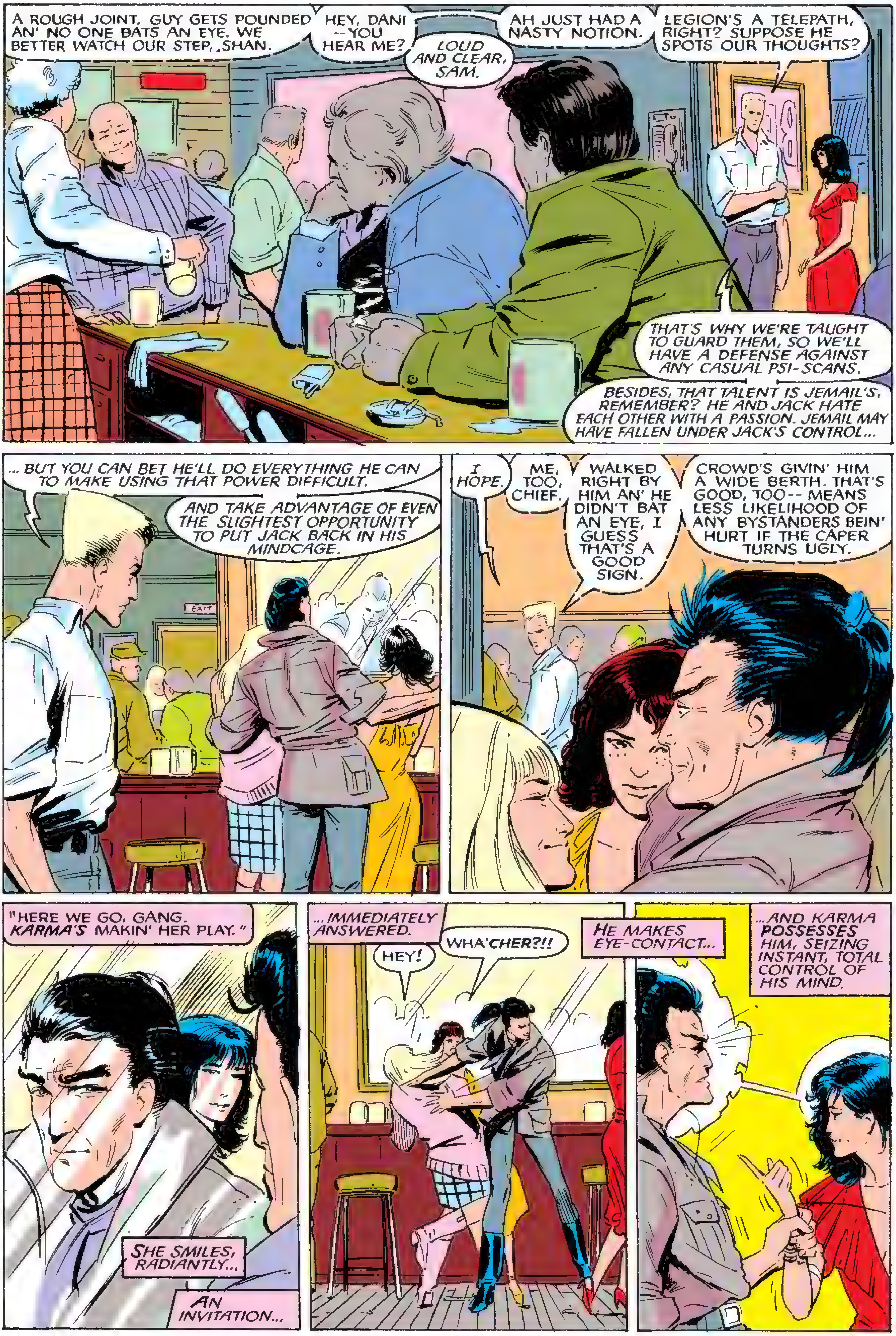

DUE NORTH FROM CAPE WRATH LIES MUIR ISLE--
--A LONELY STAND OF ROCK IN AN OFTEN ANGRY OCEAN-- AS REMOTE AND AS WILDLY BEAUTIFUL AS CAN BE.
FEW COME HERE. FEWER WANT TO.
WHICH IS HOW ITS MISTRESS, MOIRA MacTAGGERT, PREFERS IT. THE ISLAND'S SOLITUDE SUITS BOTH HER NATURE AND HER WORK AT THE MUTANT RESEARCH CENTER SHE ESTABLISHED AS A COMPANION FACILITY TO XAVIER'S SCHOOL.
Ta-daaa!
WAS THAT TRIP SO BAD, BOBBY?
!
DANIELLE-- LOOK--THE SKY! THE SUN!!
DUSK.
BUT IT SHOULD BE DAWN. WE'VE TIME-SHIFTED-- LOST THE ENTIRE DAY, AT LEAST!
SCANNING MODE.
CHIEFSELFRIENDANIMIRAGE-- SELF PERCEIVES MULTIPLE POSITIVE LIFEFORM CONTACTS WITHIN PRIMARY GEOLOGICAL FORMATION.
THAT'S AN ESCARPMENT, WARLOCK.
LET'S GET OVER THERE.
SEE?
EVERYTHING'S FINE. NO CAUSE WHATSOEVER FOR...

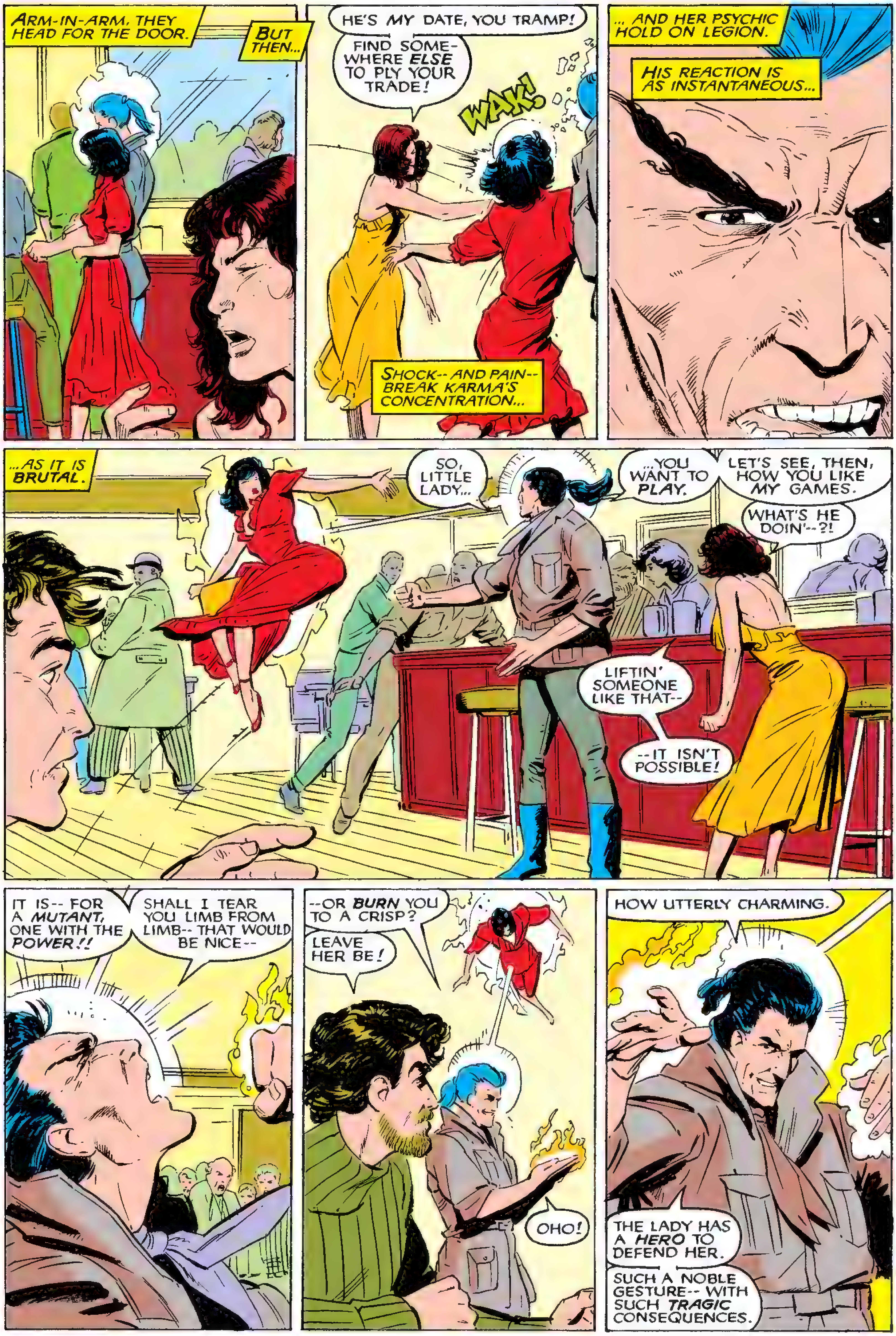

"...ALARM."
LOOK AT THE DEBRIS PATTERN.
'PEARS TO ME THAT SOMETHING PUNCHED ITS WAY OUT.
WARLOCK-- WHERE ARE THESE LIFEFORMS?
HEY, CHIEF-- Y'KNOW, THIS MESS LOOKS AWFULLY FAMILIAR.
REMINDS ME A LOT OF OUR VISIT LAST SUMMER.
I KNOW, DOUG. I'VE BEEN THINKING THE SAME THING.
VISUAL CONTACT ESTABLISHED!
SOMEBODY SCROUNGE A MEDICAL KIT-- PRONTO!
AND IF YOU SAY A WORD, BOBBY, SO HELP ME, I'LL--!
PLEASE, BLESSED SPIRITS, DON'T LET US BE TOO LATE!
AT LEAST, MY VALKYRIE POWER SEES NO SIGN OF DEATH ABOUT THEM.
RAHNE? IT'S DANI, KIDDO, WITH THE WHOLE GANG.
YOU HEARD ME!
YOU CAME!
'COURSE WE DID.
WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?
TAKE MY SHIRT, LITTLE ONE. YOURS IS A LOST CAUSE.
DANI, IT'S SCORCHED.
THERE WAS A GREAT FIRE.
I HAD TO PROTECT LADY MOIRA.
WHO, RAHNE?! WHO DID THIS?!!
LEGION.

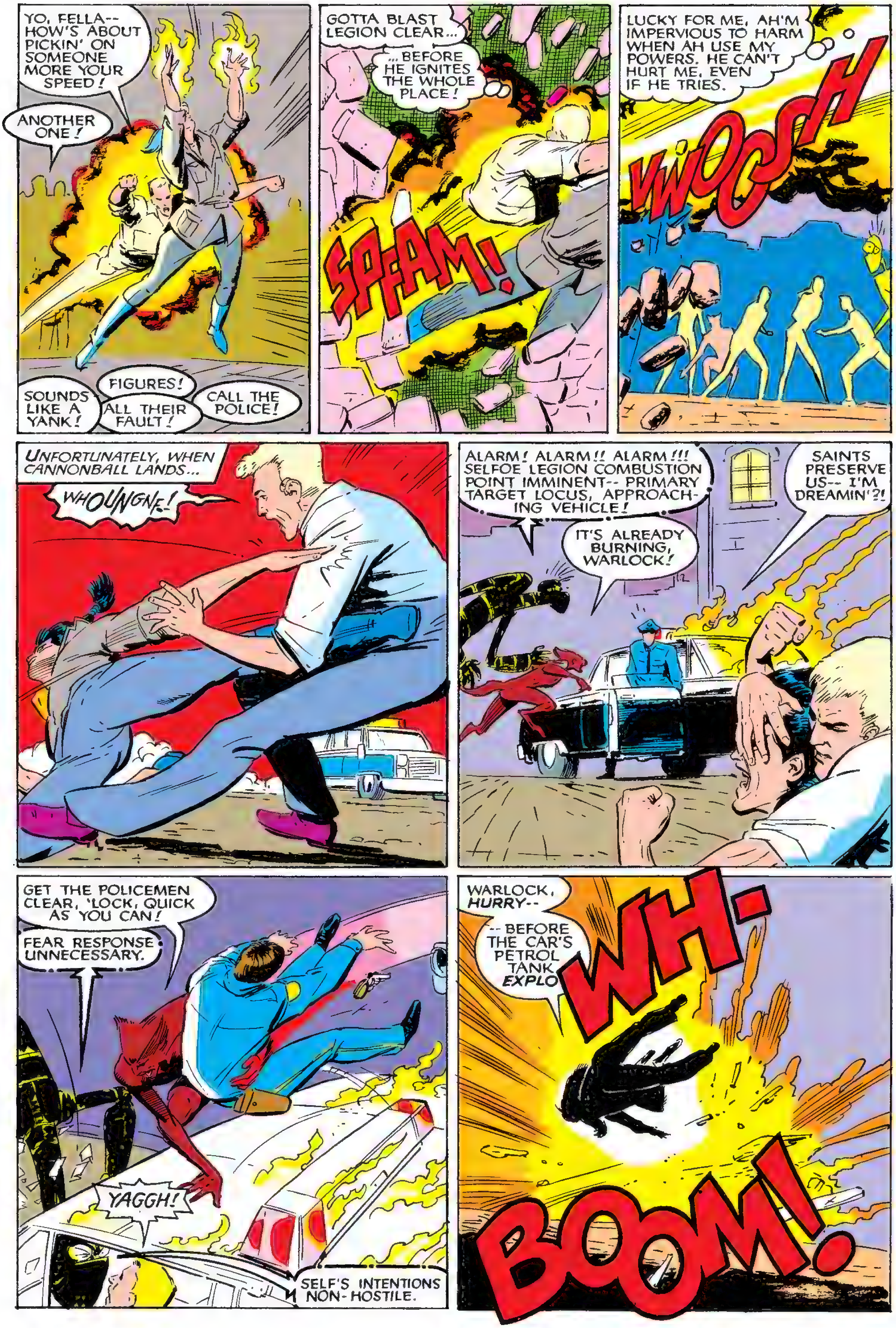

LATER--AFTER EXPLANATIONS, AND AFTER THE MUTANTS HAVE MADE CERTAIN THAT MOIRA IS UNHURT AND THERE ARE NO OTHER CASUALTIES--
--THEY PROCEED DOWN THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND TO LOCH BROOM...
...AND THE PORT OF ULLAPOOL.
INCREDIBLE! NEARLY MIDNIGHT AND THE SUN HASN'T SET!
THIS FAR NORTH, IN SUMMER, BOBBY, IT HARDLY EVER DOES.
GOOD BREAK FOR YOU, PAL, SINCE YOUR SUPER-STRENGTH IS SOLAR-POWERED.
HOPE WE WON'T NEED IT, THOUGH.
THANKS FOR THE LIFT, "DAFFY!"
QUACK-YOU'RE-QUACK-WELCOME-QUACK-SELFRIENDSAM-QUACK!
YOU OKAY, RAHNE? IF YOU'RE NOT UP TO THIS...
...I'LL HAVE WARLOCK TAKE YOU BACK.
DINNA FASH YUIRSELF, DANI. I'M FINE.
BESIDES, YOU'LL NEED MY WOLFEN SENSES TO FOLLOW LEGION'S TRAIL.
SELF CAN DO THAT!
SCANNING FOR HOSTILE MUTANTFORM.
HUMPH!
I CAN FIND HIM FASTER. AN' MORE QUIETLY.
BET YOU CAN, RAHNE. BUT WE'RE A TEAM. WE STICK--AND WORK--TOGETHER.
I BORROWED A SET OF THE X-MEN'S MICRO-TRANSCEIVERS.
THEY'RE MINIATURE TWO-WAY RADIOS. YOU FIT 'EM IN YOUR EAR. THIS WAY, WE CAN STAY IN TOUCH NO MATTER WHERE WE GO IN TOWN.
SO, DANI--WHAT ARE WE UP AGAINST?
WHO IS THIS "LEGION?"

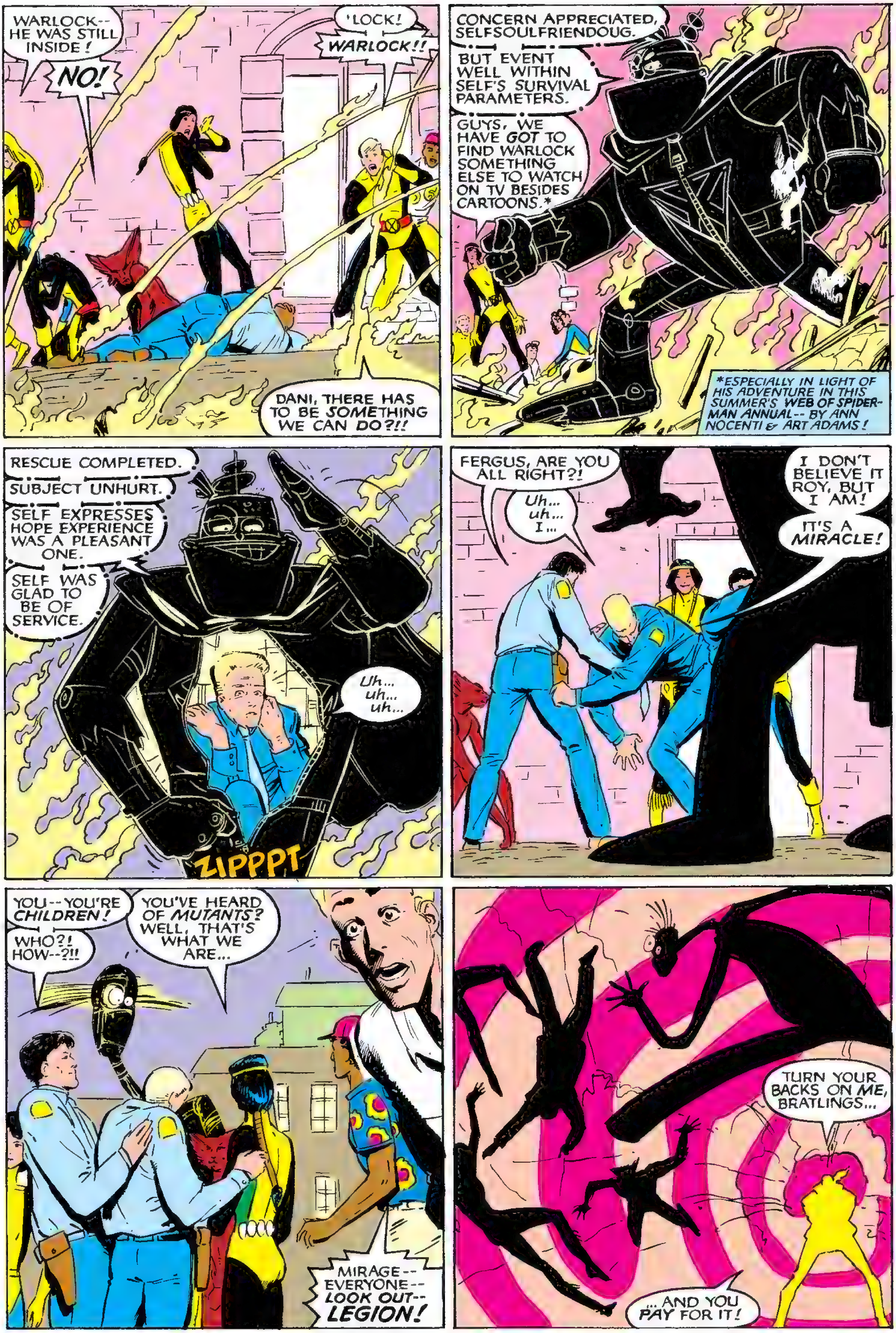

CHIEFSELFRIEND -- CONTACT ESTABLISHED.
THATAWAY-- 1471.837 METERS.
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S *SON*.
OUR OLD TEACH HAD A KID?!
RIDICULOUS!
SLY OLD DEVIL!
WHO'D'A THOUGHT IT!
WHAT A GUY!
I'LL REACH HIM FIRST!
FIRSTFRIENDRAHNEWOLFSBANE-- EXTREME CAUTION RECOMMENDED!
I'LL GUARD MY THOUGHTS, WARLOCK!
THE TELEPATH WON'T EVEN KNOW I'M THERE!
DAVEY HALLER'S REALLY A KID IN AN ADULT'S BODY. WORSE, HE SHARES THAT BODY WITH THREE OTHER CONSCIOUSNESSES.
WHEN DID RAHNE GET SO SELF-ASSERTIVE? IT'S LIKE SHE'S TAKEN ALL THE RESTRAINTS OFF HER WOLFEN NATURE. I HOPE THAT WON'T MEAN TROUBLE LATER ON.
DAVID'S A MUTANT-- A *PSI* LIKE HIS OLD MAN--BUT, AS DAVID, HE CAN'T ACCESS ANY OF THOSE POWERS.
A PALESTINIAN--ABOUT OUR AGE, SAM--NAMED *JEMAIL KARAMI* WIELDS THE TELEPATHIC TALENT. HE'S AN OKAY FELLA, DAVID'S STRONGEST DEFENDER.
HIS OPPOSITE IN EVERY WAY--THE ULTIMATE SCUZZBALL--IS *JACK WAYNE*; HIS IS THE *TELEKINETIC* ABILITY. HE WANTS DAVID'S MIND--AND BODY--ALL FOR HIMSELF.
THE WILD CARD IS A GIRL, *CYNDI*, A PUNKER NIHILIST WHO COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT ANYONE OR ANYTHING--OR SO SHE SAYS. SHE'S A *PYROTIC*.
MENTALLY, SHE *TORCHES* THINGS, SETS 'EM ON FIRE.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO, GANG, IS CORRAL DAVEY AND RESTORE EITHER HIM OR JEMAIL TO DOMINANCE.
PIECE OF CAKE.
SAY THAT WHEN WE'RE DONE, HOTSHOT.
AND WE'VE WON.

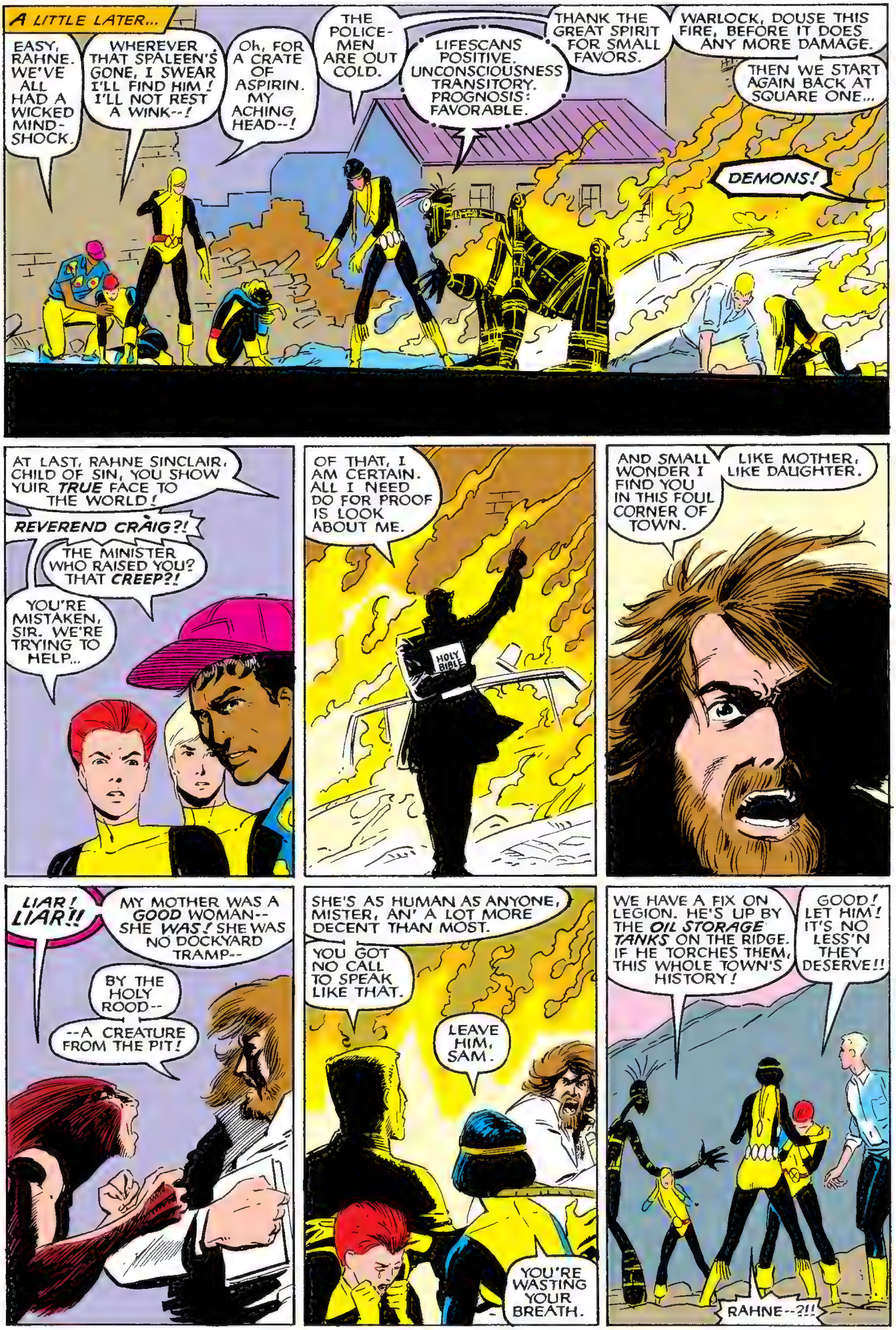

CONTACT NEXUS CONFIRMED WITHIN INHABITED STRUCTURE FUNCTIONED FOR THE CONSUMPTION OF MILD PSYCHOGENIC LIQUIDS.
YOU MEAN A *BAR?*
HEADS UP!
ALARM-- HUMAN LIFEFORM MOVING AT EXTREME VELOCITY.
COLLISION WITH ANY SOLID FORM WILL RESULT IN CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE AND POSSIBLE TERMINATION.
KRA KASH!
COUNTER-MEASURES INITIATED. RESCUE EFFECTED.
HE'S HURT BAD!
SOMEONE BEAT HIM TO A PULP BEFORE HAMMERING HIM THROUGH THAT WINDOW.
*DANI!*
RAHNE-- USING OUR SPECIAL PSILINK!
*I SEE HIM!*
BAR
NOW WHAT?
LEGION'S NEVER MET YOU OR KARMA, SAM. AND YOU'RE BOTH OLD ENOUGH...
...NOT TO LOOK OUT OF PLACE IN THERE.
KARMA'S TO GET CLOSE TO LEGION...
...AND *POSSESS* HIM.
IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, SAM...
...BOUNCE HIM OUTSIDE...
...WHERE THE REST OF US CAN TAKE A SHOT.
HE MAY NOT KNOW OUR FACES, CHIEF...
...BUT THESE UNIFORMS ARE A DEAD GIVEAWAY.
EASILY REMEDIED...
POP
...BY A QUICK ROUND-TRIP TO LIMBO...
...WHERE I CAN "MAGIC" YOU MORE APPROPRIATE DUDS.
BAR

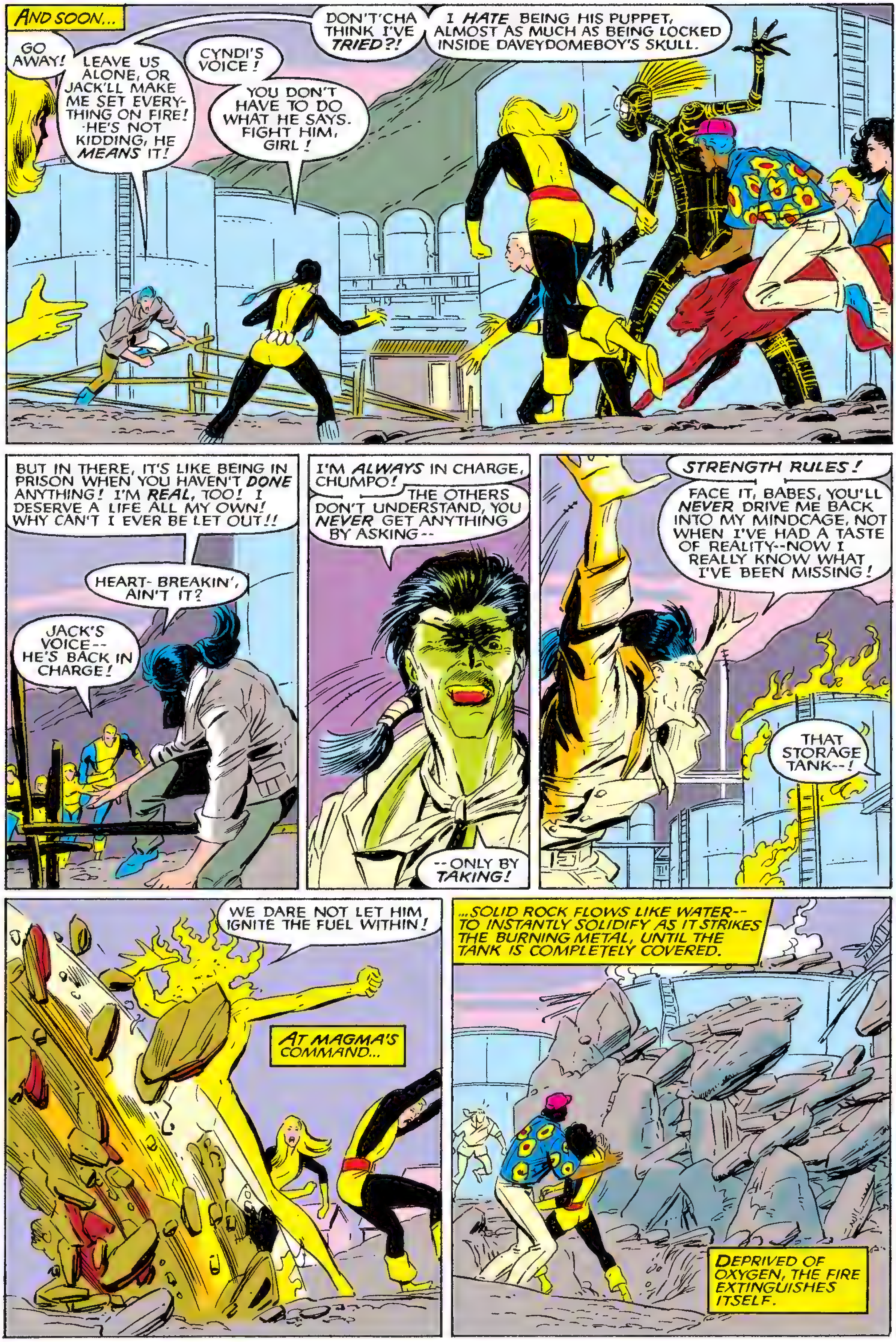

A ROUGH JOINT. GUY GETS POUNDED AN' NO ONE BATS AN EYE. WE BETTER WATCH OUR STEP, SHAN.
HEY, DANI --YOU HEAR ME?
LOUD AND CLEAR, SAM.
AH JUST HAD A NASTY NOTION.
LEGION'S A TELEPATH, RIGHT? SUPPOSE HE SPOTS OUR THOUGHTS?
THAT'S WHY WE'RE TAUGHT TO GUARD THEM, SO WE'LL HAVE A DEFENSE AGAINST ANY CASUAL PSI-SCANS.
BESIDES, THAT TALENT IS JEMAIL'S, REMEMBER? HE AND JACK HATE EACH OTHER WITH A PASSION. JEMAIL MAY HAVE FALLEN UNDER JACK'S CONTROL...
... BUT YOU CAN BET HE'LL DO EVERYTHING HE CAN TO MAKE USING THAT POWER DIFFICULT.
AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVEN THE SLIGHTEST OPPORTUNITY TO PUT JACK BACK IN HIS MINDCAGE.
EXIT
I HOPE.
ME, TOO, CHIEF.
WALKED RIGHT BY HIM AN' HE DIDN'T BAT AN EYE, I GUESS THAT'S A GOOD SIGN.
CROWD'S GIVIN' HIM A WIDE BERTH. THAT'S GOOD, TOO-- MEANS LESS LIKELIHOOD OF ANY BYSTANDERS BEIN' HURT IF THE CAPER TURNS UGLY.
"HERE WE GO, GANG. KARMA'S MAKIN' HER PLAY."
SHE SMILES, RADIANTLY...
AN INVITATION...
...IMMEDIATELY ANSWERED.
HEY!
WHA'CHER?!!
HE MAKES EYE-CONTACT...
...AND KARMA POSSESSES HIM, SEIZING INSTANT, TOTAL CONTROL OF HIS MIND.

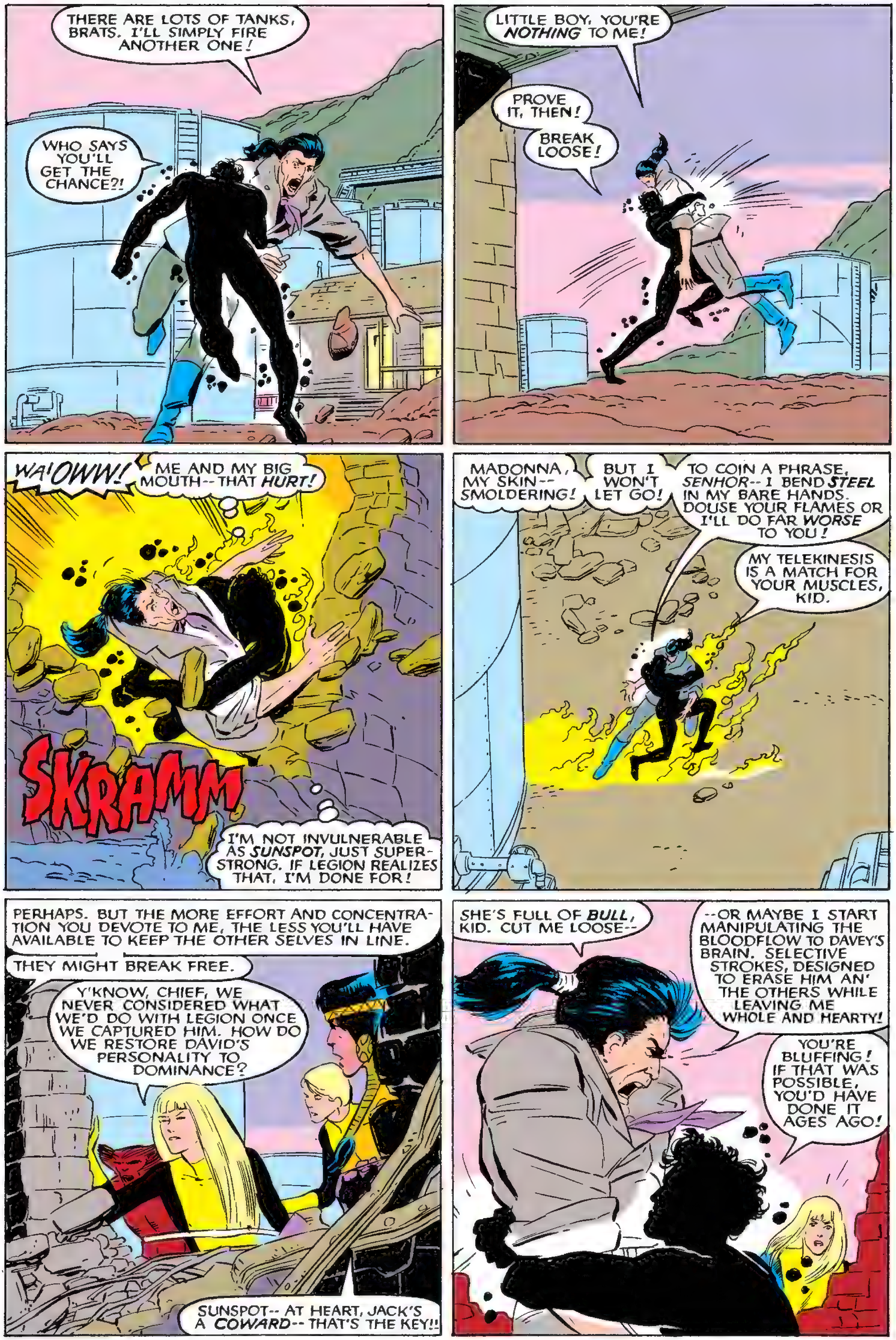

ARM-IN-ARM, THEY HEAD FOR THE DOOR.
BUT THEN...
HE'S *MY* DATE, YOU TRAMP!
FIND SOMEWHERE *ELSE* TO PLY YOUR TRADE!
WAK!
SHOCK-- AND PAIN-- BREAK KARMA'S CONCENTRATION...
... AND HER PSYCHIC HOLD ON LEGION.
HIS REACTION IS AS INSTANTANEOUS...
...AS IT IS *BRUTAL*.
SO, LITTLE LADY...
...YOU WANT TO *PLAY*.
LET'S SEE, THEN, HOW YOU LIKE *MY* GAMES.
WHAT'S HE DOIN'--?!
LIFTIN' SOMEONE LIKE THAT--
--IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!
IT IS-- FOR A *MUTANT*, ONE WITH THE *POWER*!!
SHALL I TEAR YOU LIMB FROM LIMB-- THAT WOULD BE NICE--
--OR *BURN* YOU TO A CRISP?
LEAVE HER BE!
OHO!
HOW UTTERLY CHARMING.
THE LADY HAS A *HERO* TO DEFEND HER.
SUCH A NOBLE GESTURE-- WITH SUCH *TRAGIC* CONSEQUENCES.

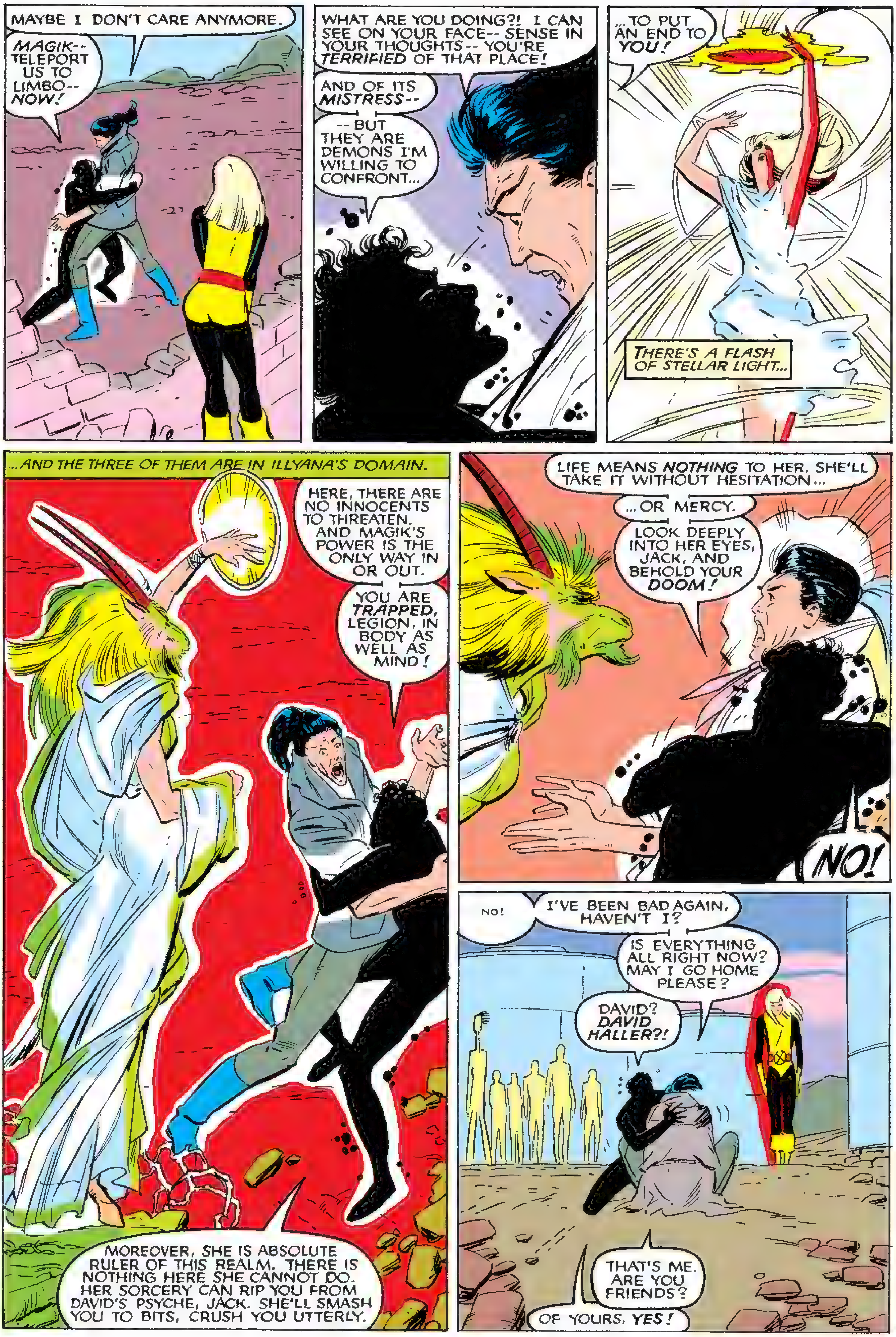

YO, FELLA-- HOW'S ABOUT PICKIN' ON SOMEONE MORE YOUR SPEED!
ANOTHER ONE!
SOUNDS LIKE A YANK!
FIGURES!
ALL THEIR FAULT!
CALL THE POLICE!
GOTTA BLAST LEGION CLEAR...
...BEFORE HE IGNITES THE WHOLE PLACE!
SPFFAM!
LUCKY FOR ME, AH'M IMPERVIOUS TO HARM WHEN AH USE MY POWERS. HE CAN'T HURT ME, EVEN IF HE TRIES.
WHOOSH
UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN CANNONBALL LANDS...
WHOUNGNE!
ALARM! ALARM!! ALARM!!! SELFOE LEGION COMBUSTION POINT IMMINENT-- PRIMARY TARGET LOCUS, APPROACHING VEHICLE!
IT'S ALREADY BURNING, WARLOCK!
SAINTS PRESERVE US-- I'M DREAMIN'?!
GET THE POLICEMEN CLEAR, 'LOCK, QUICK AS YOU CAN!
FEAR RESPONSE UNNECESSARY.
YAGGH!
SELF'S INTENTIONS NON-HOSTILE.
WARLOCK, *HURRY*--
-- BEFORE THE CAR'S PETROL TANK *EXPLO*
WH-BOOM!

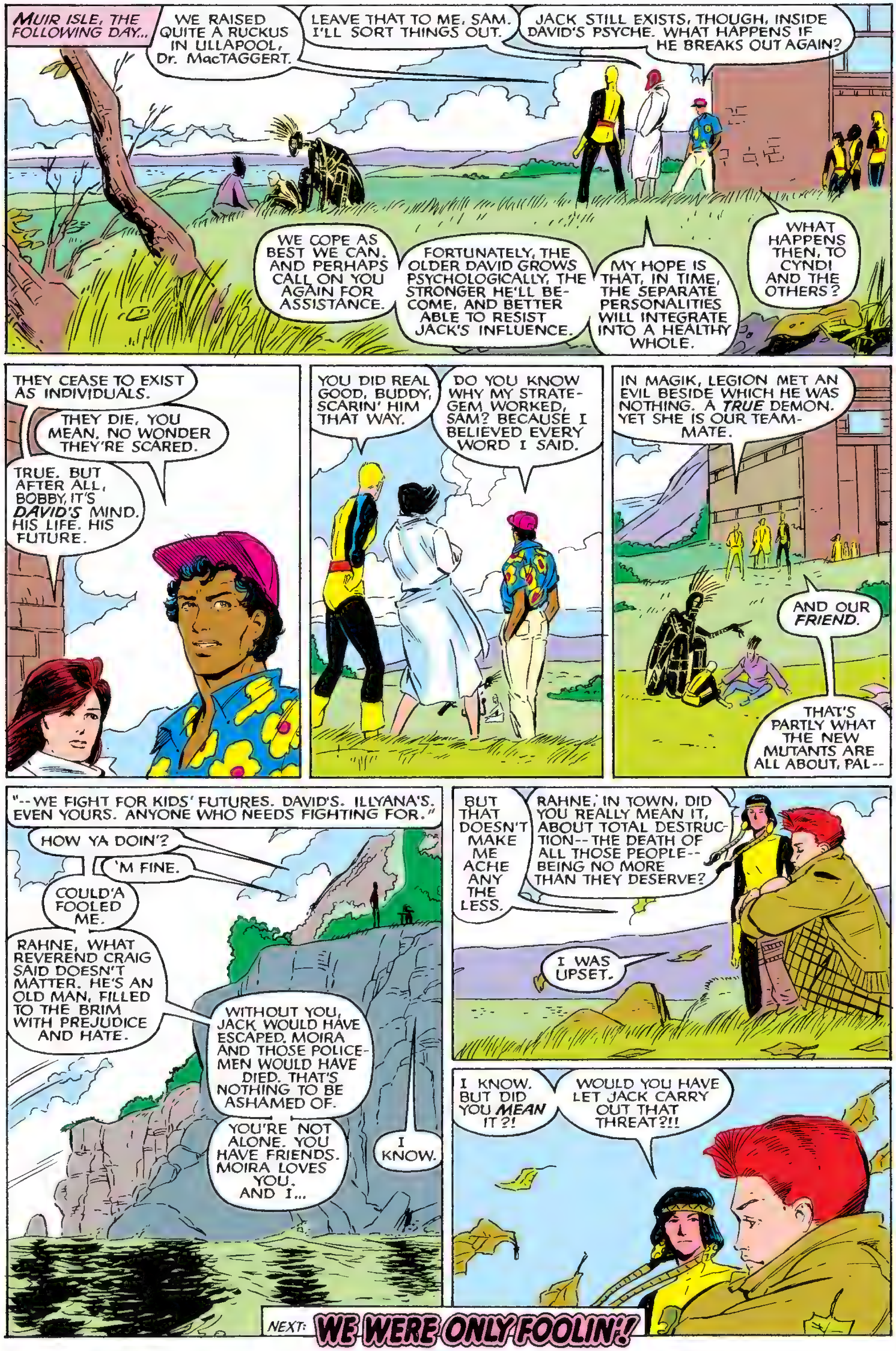

WARLOCK-- HE WAS STILL INSIDE!
NO!
'LOCK!
WARLOCK!!
DANI, THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO?!!
CONCERN APPRECIATED, SELFSOULFRIENDOUG.
BUT EVENT WELL WITHIN SELF'S SURVIVAL PARAMETERS.
GUYS, WE HAVE GOT TO FIND WARLOCK SOMETHING ELSE TO WATCH ON TV BESIDES CARTOONS.*
*ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF HIS ADVENTURE IN THIS SUMMER'S WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL-- BY ANN NOCENTI & ART ADAMS!
RESCUE COMPLETED.
SUBJECT UNHURT.
SELF EXPRESSES HOPE EXPERIENCE WAS A PLEASANT ONE.
SELF WAS GLAD TO BE OF SERVICE.
Uh... uh... uh...
ZIPPPT
FERGUS, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
Uh... uh... I...
I DON'T BELIEVE IT ROY, BUT I AM!
IT'S A MIRACLE!
YOU--YOU'RE CHILDREN!
WHO?! HOW--?!!
YOU'VE HEARD OF MUTANTS? WELL, THAT'S WHAT WE ARE...
MIRAGE-- EVERYONE-- LOOK OUT-- LEGION!
TURN YOUR BACKS ON ME, BRATLINGS...
...AND YOU PAY FOR IT!


A LITTLE LATER...
EASY, RAHNE. WE'VE ALL HAD A WICKED MIND-SHOCK.
WHEREVER THAT SPALEEN'S GONE, I SWEAR I'LL FIND HIM! I'LL NOT REST A WINK--!
Oh, FOR A CRATE OF ASPIRIN. MY ACHING HEAD--!
THE POLICE-MEN ARE OUT COLD.
LIFESCANS POSITIVE. UNCONSCIOUSNESS TRANSITORY. PROGNOSIS: FAVORABLE.
THANK THE GREAT SPIRIT FOR SMALL FAVORS.
WARLOCK, DOUSE THIS FIRE, BEFORE IT DOES ANY MORE DAMAGE.
THEN WE START AGAIN BACK AT SQUARE ONE...
DEMONS!
AT LAST, RAHNE SINCLAIR, CHILD OF SIN, YOU SHOW YUIR TRUE FACE TO THE WORLD!
REVEREND CRAIG?!
THE MINISTER WHO RAISED YOU? THAT CREEP?!
YOU'RE MISTAKEN, SIR. WE'RE TRYING TO HELP...
OF THAT, I AM CERTAIN. ALL I NEED DO FOR PROOF IS LOOK ABOUT ME.
HOLY BIBLE
AND SMALL WONDER I FIND YOU IN THIS FOUL CORNER OF TOWN.
LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER.
LIAR! LIAR!!
MY MOTHER WAS A GOOD WOMAN-- SHE WAS! SHE WAS NO DOCKYARD TRAMP--
BY THE HOLY ROOD--
--A CREATURE FROM THE PIT!
SHE'S AS HUMAN AS ANYONE, MISTER, AN' A LOT MORE DECENT THAN MOST.
YOU GOT NO CALL TO SPEAK LIKE THAT.
LEAVE HIM, SAM.
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR BREATH.
WE HAVE A FIX ON LEGION. HE'S UP BY THE OIL STORAGE TANKS ON THE RIDGE. IF HE TORCHES THEM, THIS WHOLE TOWN'S HISTORY!
GOOD! LET HIM! IT'S NO LESS'N THEY DESERVE!!
RAHNE--?!!


AND SOON...
GO AWAY!
LEAVE US ALONE, OR JACK'LL MAKE ME SET EVERYTHING ON FIRE! HE'S NOT KIDDING, HE *MEANS* IT!
CYNDI'S VOICE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO WHAT HE SAYS. FIGHT HIM, GIRL!
DON'T'CHA THINK I'VE *TRIED?!*
I *HATE* BEING HIS PUPPET, ALMOST AS MUCH AS BEING LOCKED INSIDE DAVEYDOMEBOY'S SKULL.
BUT IN THERE, IT'S LIKE BEING IN PRISON WHEN YOU HAVEN'T *DONE* ANYTHING! I'M *REAL*, TOO! I DESERVE A LIFE ALL MY OWN! WHY CAN'T I EVER BE LET OUT!!
HEART-BREAKIN', AIN'T IT?
JACK'S VOICE-- HE'S BACK IN CHARGE!
I'M *ALWAYS* IN CHARGE, CHUMPO!
THE OTHERS DON'T UNDERSTAND, YOU *NEVER* GET ANYTHING BY ASKING--
--ONLY BY *TAKING!*
STRENGTH RULES!
FACE IT, BABES, YOU'LL *NEVER* DRIVE ME BACK INTO MY MINDCAGE, NOT WHEN I'VE HAD A TASTE OF REALITY--NOW I REALLY KNOW WHAT I'VE BEEN MISSING!
THAT STORAGE TANK--!
WE DARE NOT LET HIM IGNITE THE FUEL WITHIN!
AT MAGMA'S COMMAND...
...SOLID ROCK FLOWS LIKE WATER-- TO INSTANTLY SOLIDIFY AS IT STRIKES THE BURNING METAL, UNTIL THE TANK IS COMPLETELY COVERED.
DEPRIVED OF OXYGEN, THE FIRE EXTINGUISHES ITSELF.


THERE ARE LOTS OF TANKS, BRATS. I'LL SIMPLY FIRE ANOTHER ONE!
WHO SAYS YOU'LL GET THE CHANCE?!
LITTLE BOY, YOU'RE *NOTHING* TO ME!
PROVE IT, THEN!
BREAK LOOSE!
WA!OWW!
ME AND MY BIG MOUTH--THAT *HURT!*
SKRAMM
I'M NOT INVULNERABLE AS *SUNSPOT*, JUST SUPER-STRONG. IF LEGION REALIZES THAT, I'M DONE FOR!
MADONNA, MY SKIN-- SMOLDERING!
BUT I WON'T LET GO!
TO COIN A PHRASE, *SENHOR*-- I BEND *STEEL* IN MY BARE HANDS. DOUSE YOUR FLAMES OR I'LL DO FAR *WORSE* TO YOU!
MY TELEKINESIS IS A MATCH FOR YOUR MUSCLES, KID.
PERHAPS. BUT THE MORE EFFORT AND CONCENTRATION YOU DEVOTE TO ME, THE LESS YOU'LL HAVE AVAILABLE TO KEEP THE OTHER SELVES IN LINE.
THEY MIGHT BREAK FREE.
Y'KNOW, CHIEF, WE NEVER CONSIDERED WHAT WE'D DO WITH LEGION ONCE WE CAPTURED HIM. HOW DO WE RESTORE DAVID'S PERSONALITY TO DOMINANCE?
SUNSPOT-- AT HEART, JACK'S A *COWARD*-- THAT'S THE KEY!!
SHE'S FULL OF *BULL*, KID. CUT ME LOOSE--
--OR MAYBE I START MANIPULATING THE BLOODFLOW TO DAVEY'S BRAIN. SELECTIVE STROKES, DESIGNED TO ERASE HIM AN' THE OTHERS WHILE LEAVING ME WHOLE AND HEARTY!
YOU'RE BLUFFING! IF THAT WAS POSSIBLE, YOU'D HAVE DONE IT AGES AGO!


MAYBE I DON'T CARE ANYMORE.
MAGIK-- TELEPORT US TO LIMBO-- NOW!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! I CAN SEE ON YOUR FACE-- SENSE IN YOUR THOUGHTS-- YOU'RE TERRIFIED OF THAT PLACE!
AND OF ITS MISTRESS--
--BUT THEY ARE DEMONS I'M WILLING TO CONFRONT...
...TO PUT AN END TO YOU!
THERE'S A FLASH OF STELLAR LIGHT...
...AND THE THREE OF THEM ARE IN ILLYANA'S DOMAIN.
HERE, THERE ARE NO INNOCENTS TO THREATEN. AND MAGIK'S POWER IS THE ONLY WAY IN OR OUT.
YOU ARE TRAPPED, LEGION, IN BODY AS WELL AS MIND!
MOREOVER, SHE IS ABSOLUTE RULER OF THIS REALM. THERE IS NOTHING HERE SHE CANNOT DO. HER SORCERY CAN RIP YOU FROM DAVID'S PSYCHE, JACK. SHE'LL SMASH YOU TO BITS, CRUSH YOU UTTERLY.
LIFE MEANS NOTHING TO HER. SHE'LL TAKE IT WITHOUT HESITATION...
...OR MERCY.
LOOK DEEPLY INTO HER EYES, JACK, AND BEHOLD YOUR DOOM!
NO!
NO!
I'VE BEEN BAD AGAIN, HAVEN'T I?
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT NOW? MAY I GO HOME PLEASE?
DAVID? DAVID HALLER?!
THAT'S ME. ARE YOU FRIENDS?
OF YOURS, YES!


MUIR ISLE, THE FOLLOWING DAY...
WE RAISED QUITE A RUCKUS IN ULLAPOOL, Dr. MacTAGGERT.
LEAVE THAT TO ME, SAM. I'LL SORT THINGS OUT.
JACK STILL EXISTS, THOUGH, INSIDE DAVID'S PSYCHE. WHAT HAPPENS IF HE BREAKS OUT AGAIN?
WE COPE AS BEST WE CAN. AND PERHAPS CALL ON YOU AGAIN FOR ASSISTANCE.
FORTUNATELY, THE OLDER DAVID GROWS PSYCHOLOGICALLY, THE STRONGER HE'LL BECOME, AND BETTER ABLE TO RESIST JACK'S INFLUENCE.
MY HOPE IS THAT, IN TIME, THE SEPARATE PERSONALITIES WILL INTEGRATE INTO A HEALTHY WHOLE.
WHAT HAPPENS THEN, TO CYNDI AND THE OTHERS?
THEY CEASE TO EXIST AS INDIVIDUALS.
THEY DIE, YOU MEAN. NO WONDER THEY'RE SCARED.
TRUE. BUT AFTER ALL, BOBBY, IT'S DAVID'S MIND. HIS LIFE. HIS FUTURE.
YOU DID REAL GOOD, BUDDY, SCARIN' HIM THAT WAY.
DO YOU KNOW WHY MY STRATEGEM WORKED, SAM? BECAUSE I BELIEVED EVERY WORD I SAID.
IN MAGIK, LEGION MET AN EVIL BESIDE WHICH HE WAS NOTHING. A TRUE DEMON. YET SHE IS OUR TEAMMATE.
AND OUR FRIEND.
THAT'S PARTLY WHAT THE NEW MUTANTS ARE ALL ABOUT, PAL--
"--WE FIGHT FOR KIDS' FUTURES. DAVID'S. ILLYANA'S. EVEN YOURS. ANYONE WHO NEEDS FIGHTING FOR."
HOW YA DOIN'?
'M FINE.
COULD'A FOOLED ME.
RAHNE, WHAT REVEREND CRAIG SAID DOESN'T MATTER. HE'S AN OLD MAN, FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH PREJUDICE AND HATE.
WITHOUT YOU, JACK WOULD HAVE ESCAPED. MOIRA AND THOSE POLICEMEN WOULD HAVE DIED. THAT'S NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.
YOU'RE NOT ALONE. YOU HAVE FRIENDS. MOIRA LOVES YOU. AND I...
I KNOW.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME ACHE ANY THE LESS.
RAHNE, IN TOWN, DID YOU REALLY MEAN IT, ABOUT TOTAL DESTRUCTION--THE DEATH OF ALL THOSE PEOPLE--BEING NO MORE THAN THEY DESERVE?
I WAS UPSET.
I KNOW. BUT DID YOU MEAN IT?!
WOULD YOU HAVE LET JACK CARRY OUT THAT THREAT?!!
NEXT: WE WERE ONLY FOOLIN'!

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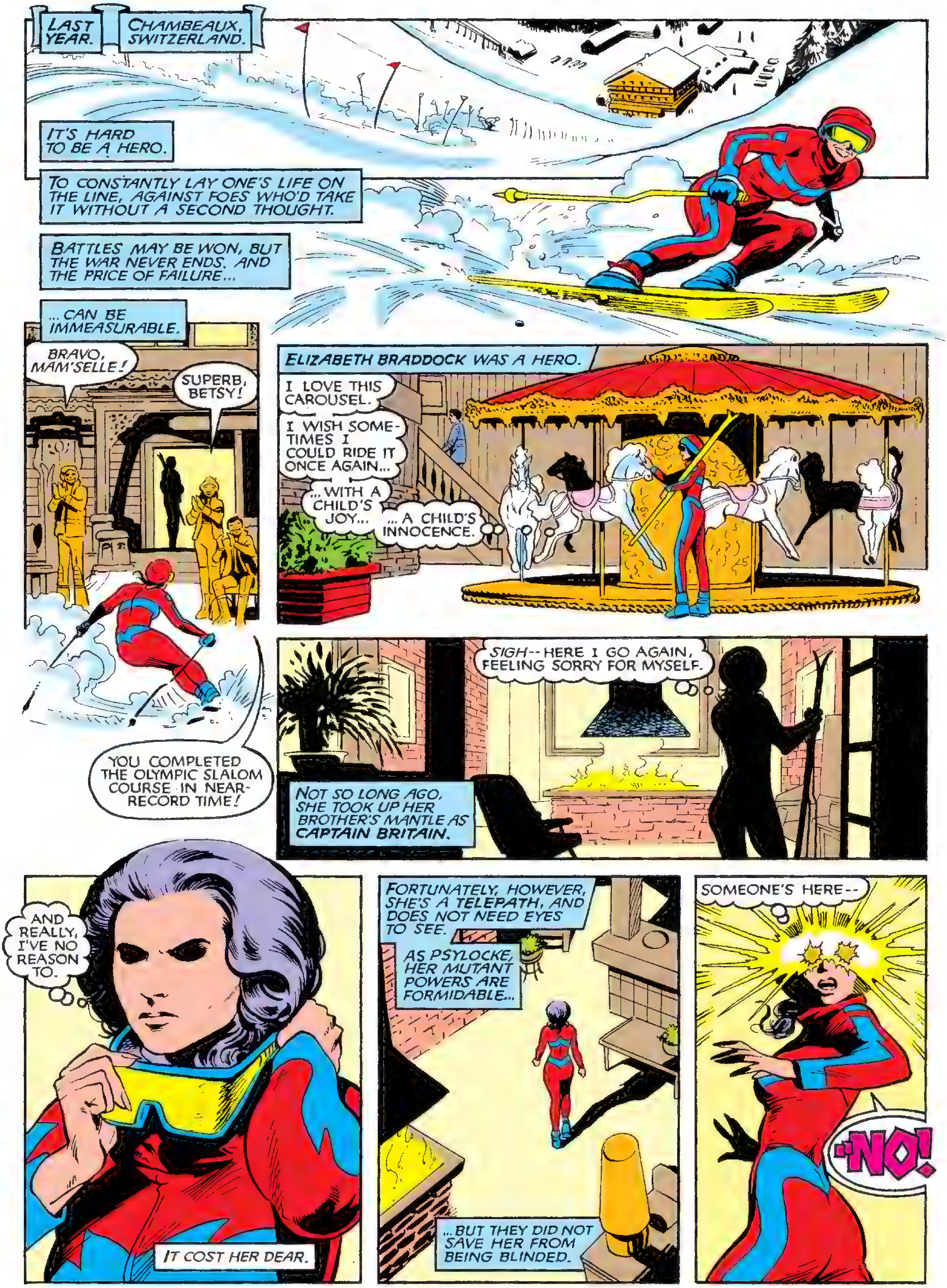
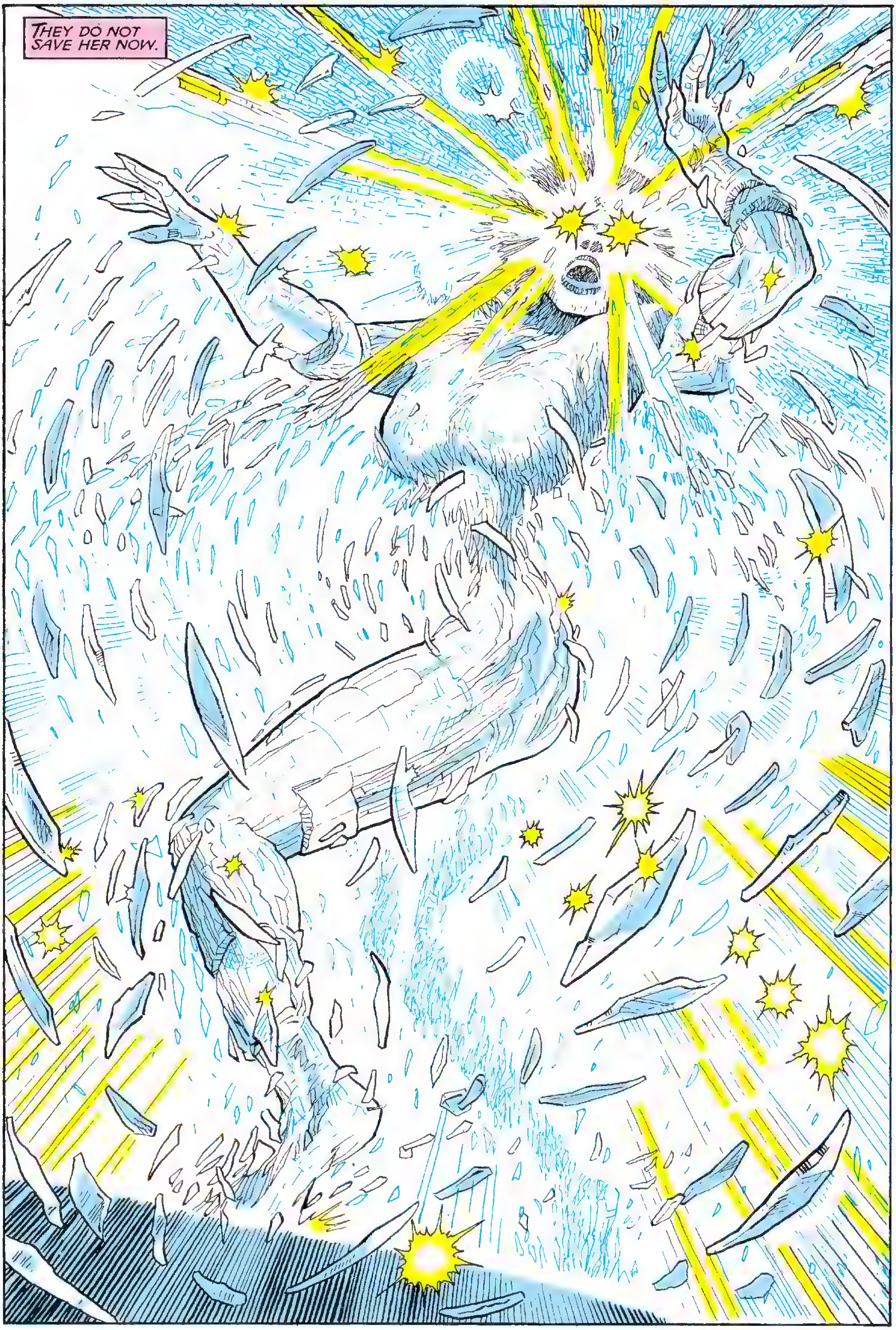
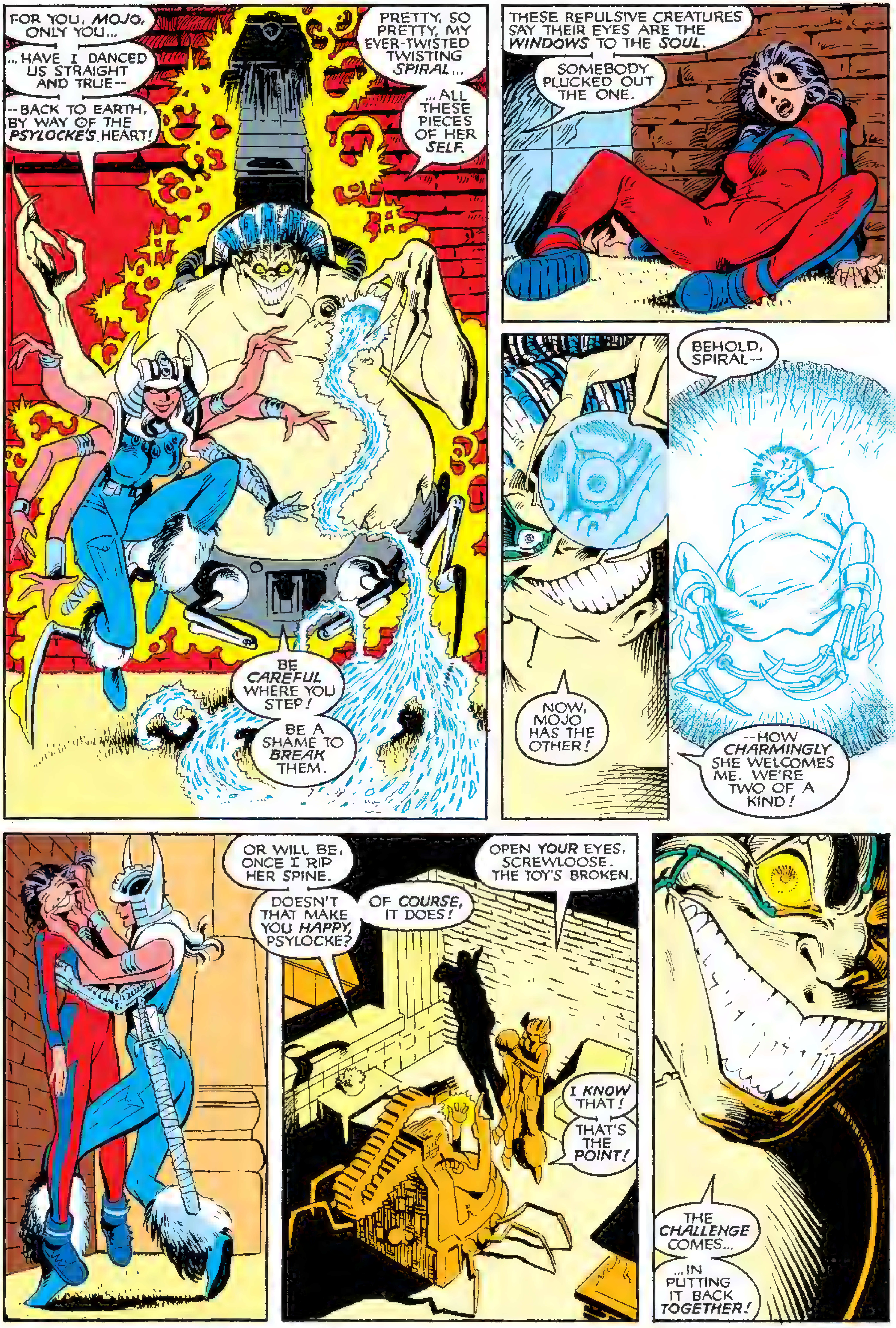
WILDWAYS


LAST YEAR.
CHAMBEAUX, SWITZERLAND.
IT'S HARD TO BE A HERO.
TO CONSTANTLY LAY ONE'S LIFE ON THE LINE, AGAINST FOES WHO'D TAKE IT WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.
BATTLES MAY BE WON, BUT THE WAR NEVER ENDS. AND THE PRICE OF FAILURE...
...CAN BE IMMEASURABLE.
BRAVO, MAM'SELLE!
SUPERB, BETSY!
YOU COMPLETED THE OLYMPIC SLALOM COURSE IN NEAR-RECORD TIME!
ELIZABETH BRADDOCK WAS A HERO.
I LOVE THIS CAROUSEL.
I WISH SOMETIMES I COULD RIDE IT ONCE AGAIN...
...WITH A CHILD'S JOY...
...A CHILD'S INNOCENCE.
SIGH--HERE I GO AGAIN, FEELING SORRY FOR MYSELF.
NOT SO LONG AGO, SHE TOOK UP HER BROTHER'S MANTLE AS CAPTAIN BRITAIN.
AND REALLY, I'VE NO REASON TO.
IT COST HER DEAR.
FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, SHE'S A TELEPATH, AND DOES NOT NEED EYES TO SEE.
AS PSYLOCKE, HER MUTANT POWERS ARE FORMIDABLE...
...BUT THEY DID NOT SAVE HER FROM BEING BLINDED.
SOMEONE'S HERE--
NO!


THEY DO NOT SAVE HER NOW.


FOR YOU, *MOJO*, ONLY YOU...
...HAVE I DANCED US STRAIGHT AND TRUE--
--BACK TO EARTH, BY WAY OF THE *PSYLOCKE'S* HEART!
PRETTY, SO PRETTY, MY EVER-TWISTED TWISTING *SPIRAL*...
...ALL THESE PIECES OF HER *SELF*.
BE *CAREFUL* WHERE YOU STEP!
BE A SHAME TO *BREAK* THEM.
THESE REPULSIVE CREATURES SAY THEIR EYES ARE THE *WINDOWS* TO THE *SOUL*.
SOMEBODY PLUCKED OUT THE ONE.
NOW, MOJO HAS THE OTHER!
BEHOLD, SPIRAL--
--HOW *CHARMINGLY* SHE WELCOMES ME. WE'RE TWO OF A KIND!
OR WILL BE, ONCE I RIP HER SPINE.
DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU *HAPPY*, PSYLOCKE?
OF *COURSE*, IT DOES!
OPEN *YOUR* EYES, SCREWLOOSE. THE TOY'S BROKEN.
I *KNOW* THAT!
THAT'S THE *POINT!*
THE *CHALLENGE* COMES...
...IN PUTTING IT BACK *TOGETHER!*

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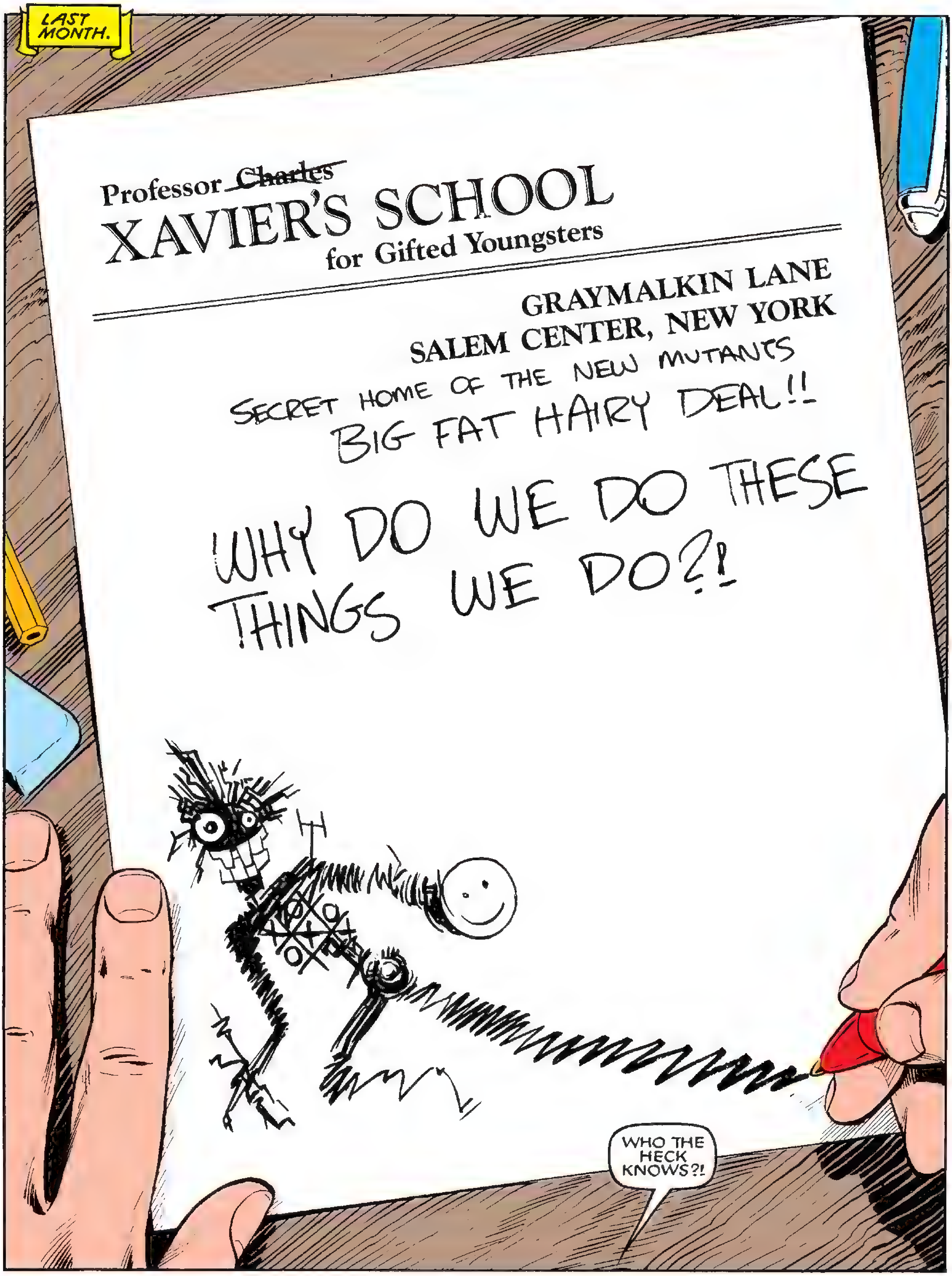
LAST MONTH.
Professor ~~Charles~~
XAVIER'S SCHOOL
for Gifted Youngsters
GRAYMALKIN LANE
SALEM CENTER, NEW YORK
SECRET HOME OF THE NEW MUTANTS
BIG FAT HAIRY DEAL!!
WHY DO WE DO THESE THINGS WE DO?!
WHO THE HECK KNOWS?!

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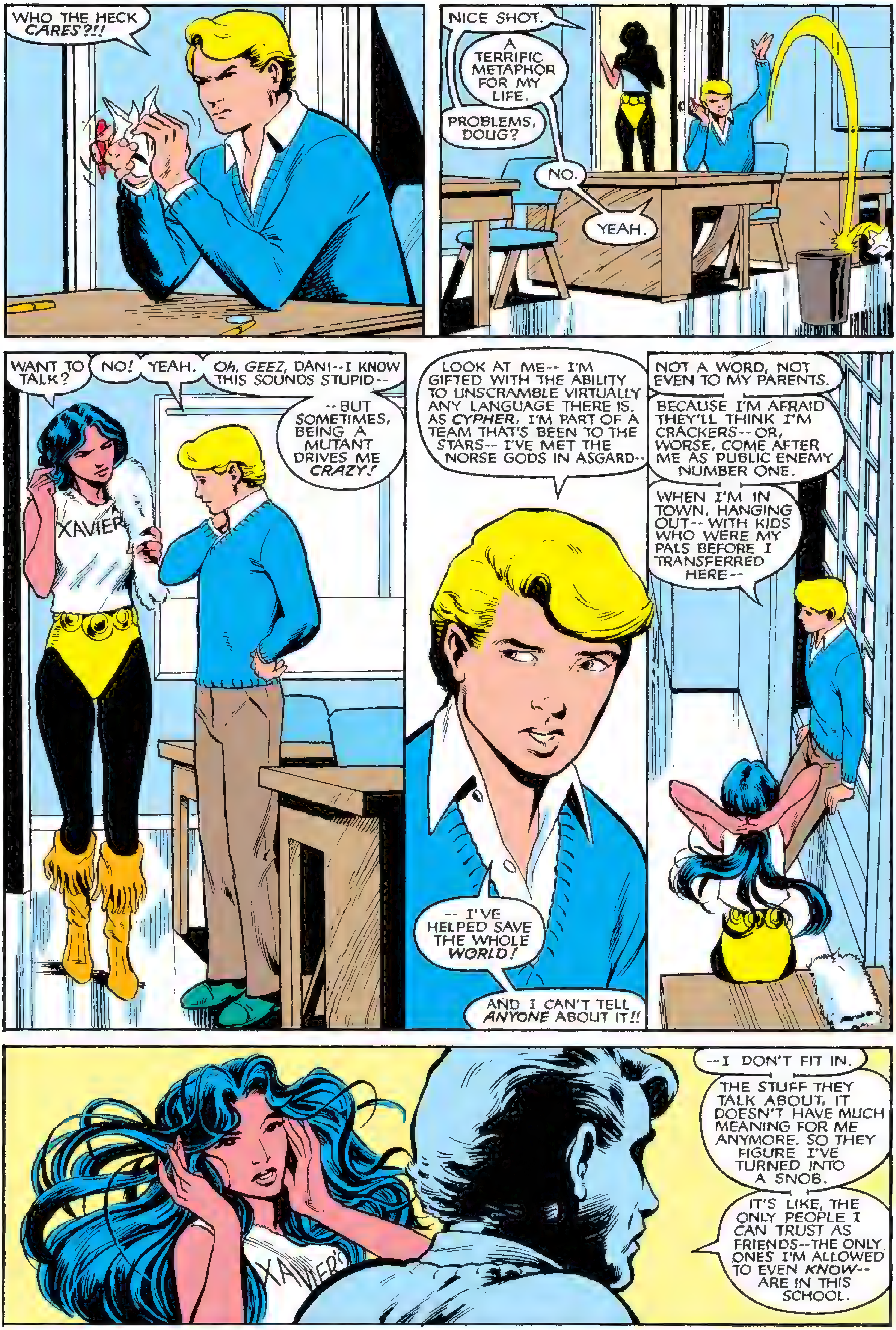
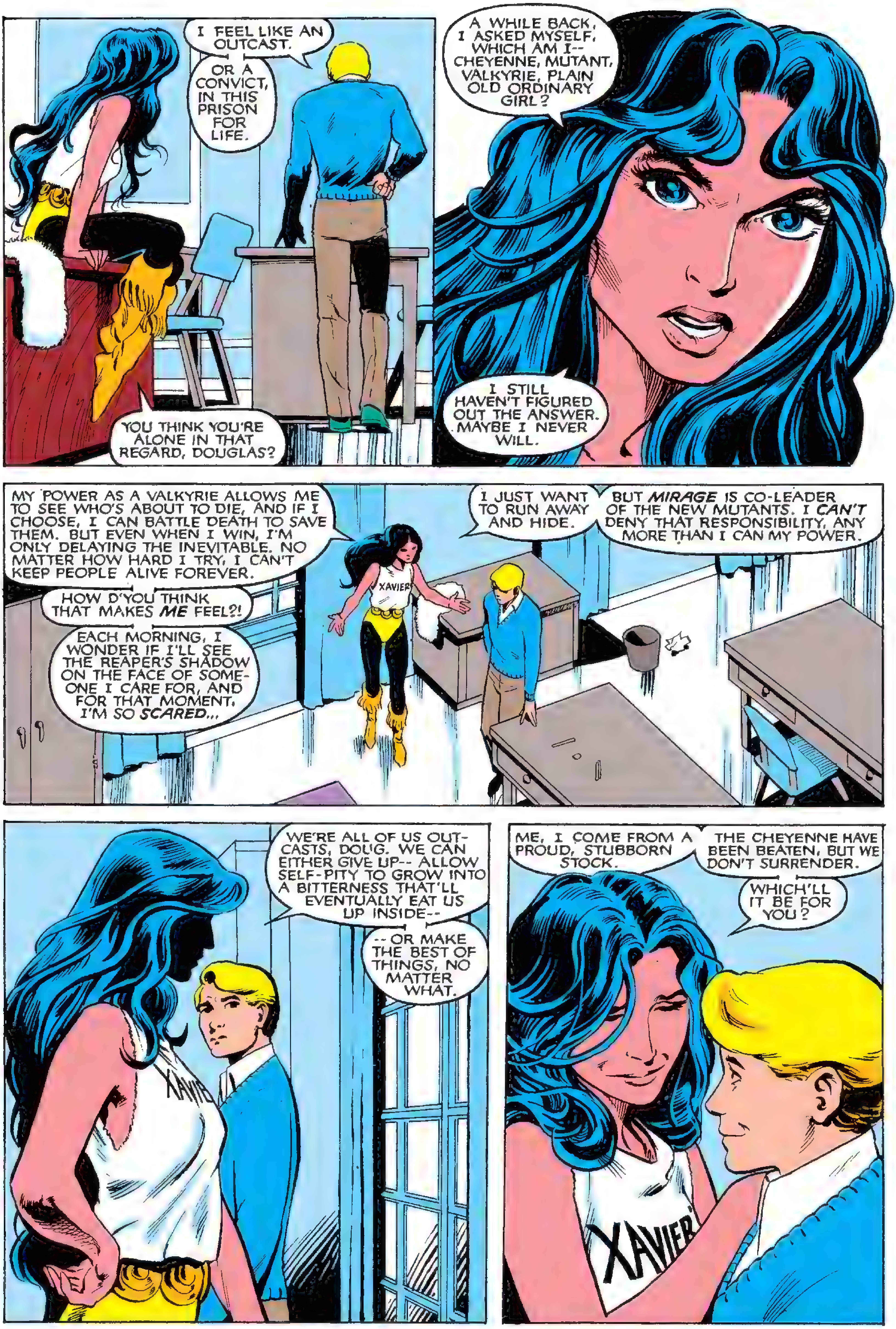
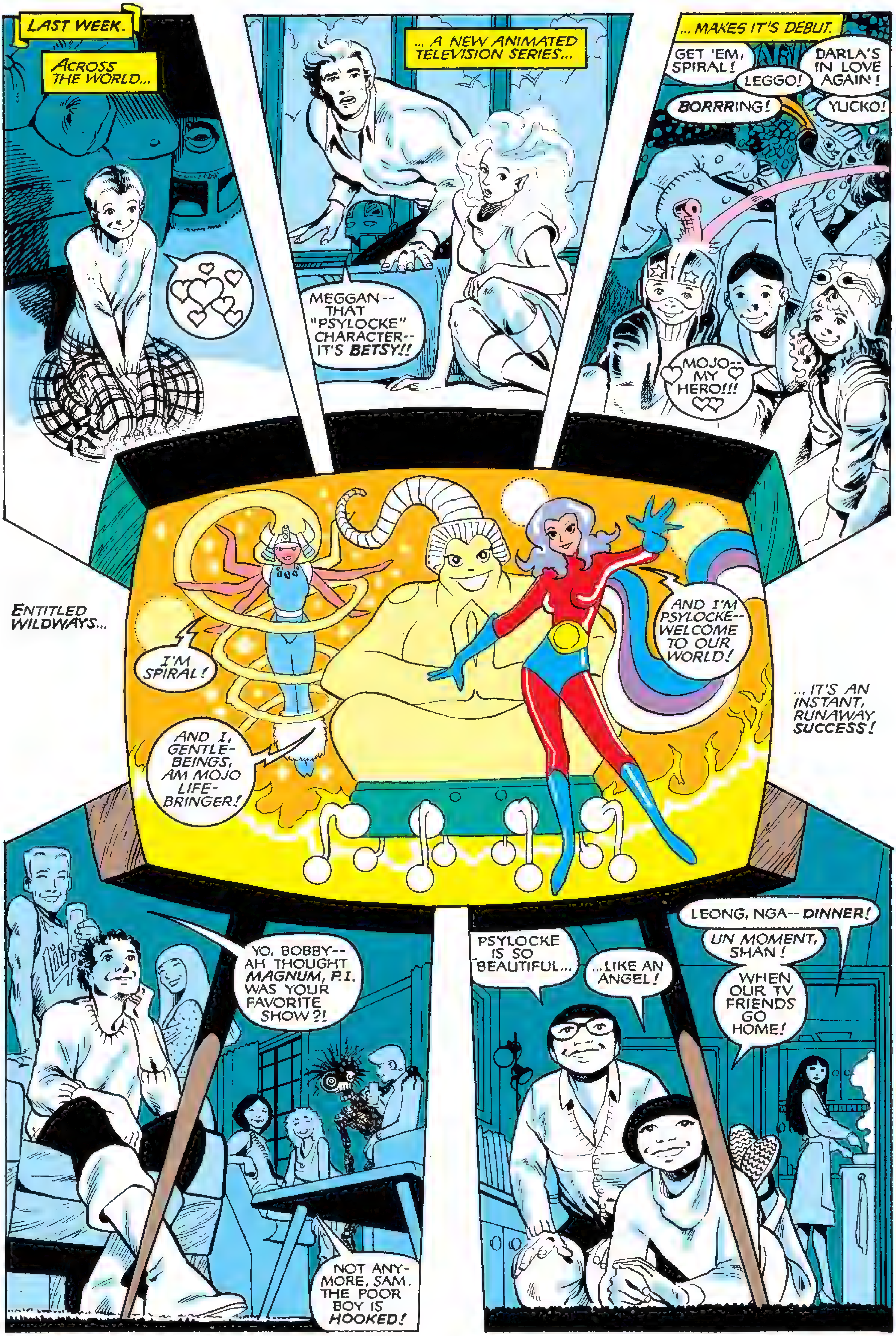
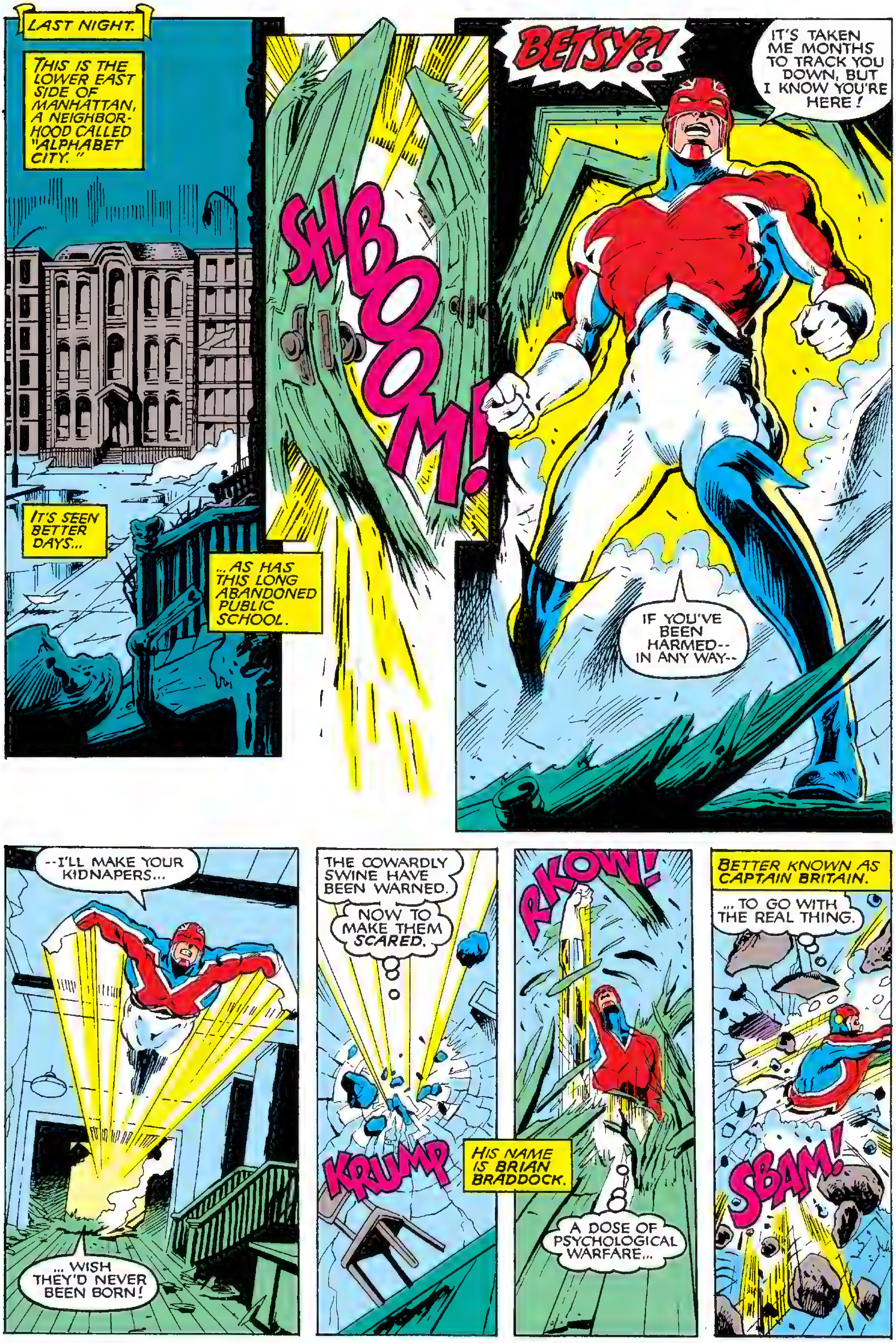
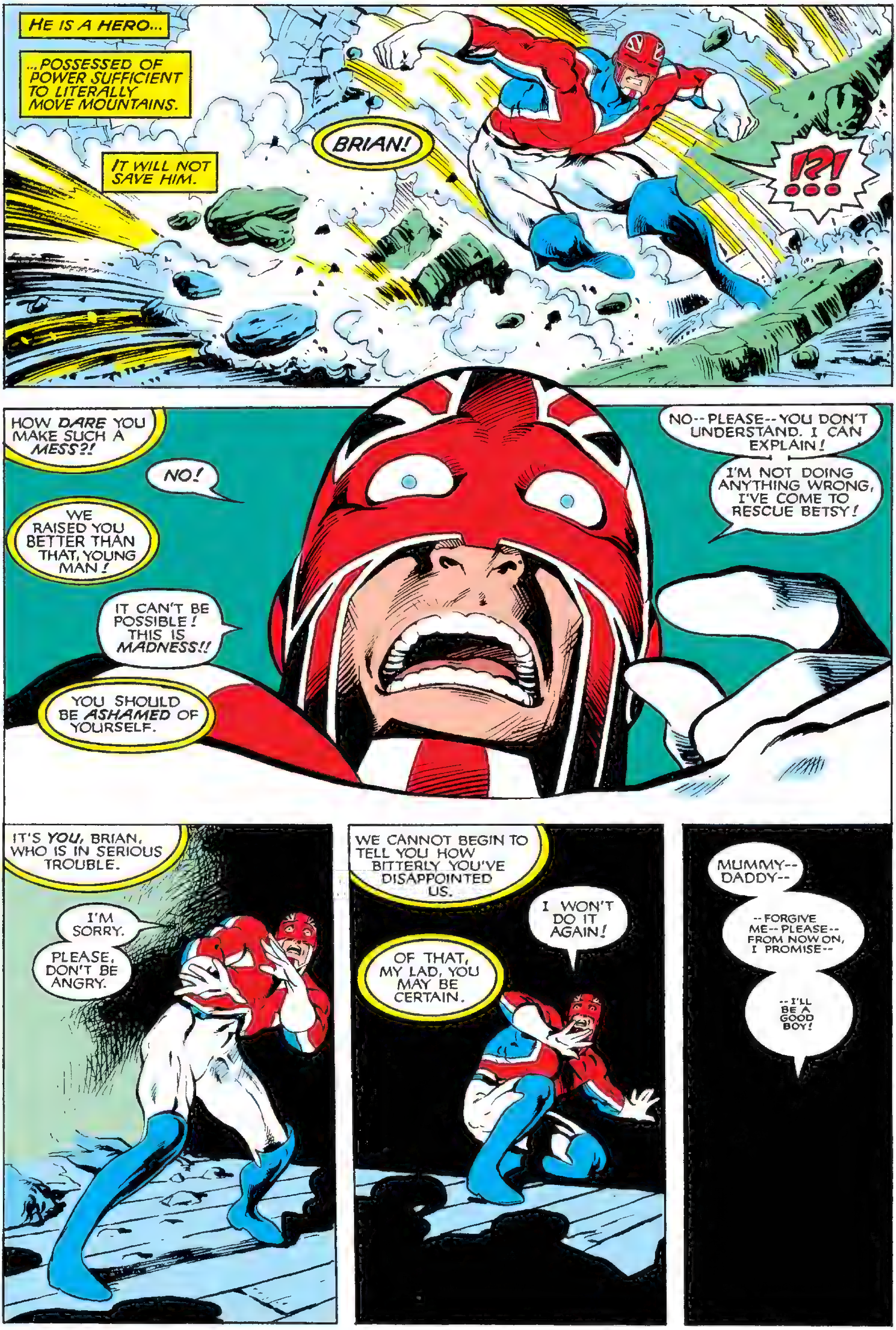
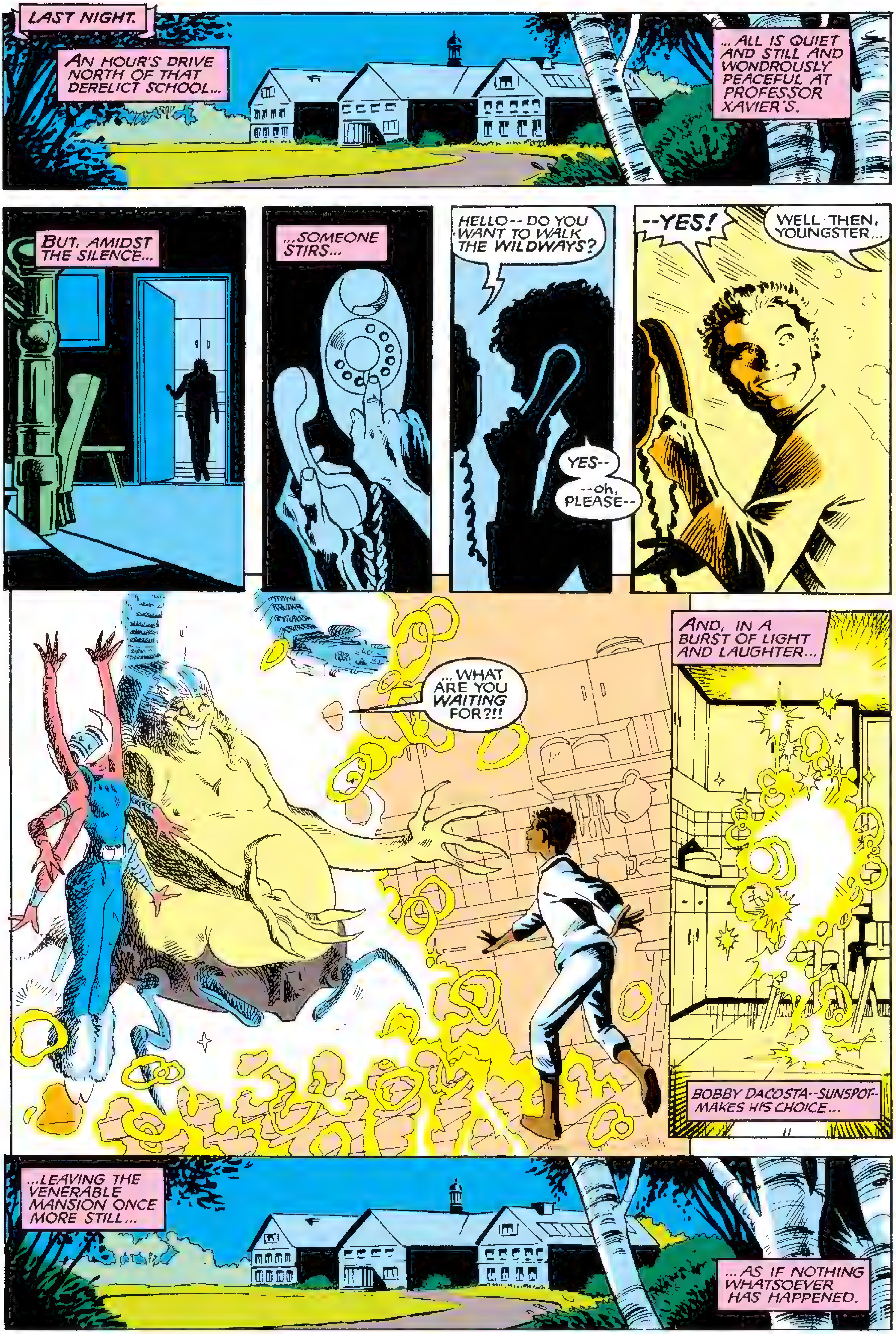

WHO THE HECK *CARES?!!*
NICE SHOT.
A TERRIFIC METAPHOR FOR MY LIFE.
PROBLEMS, DOUG?
NO.
YEAH.
WANT TO TALK?
NO!
YEAH.
*Oh, GEEZ,* DANI--I KNOW THIS SOUNDS STUPID--
--BUT SOMETIMES, BEING A MUTANT DRIVES ME *CRAZY!*
XAVIER
LOOK AT ME-- I'M GIFTED WITH THE ABILITY TO UNSCRAMBLE VIRTUALLY ANY LANGUAGE THERE IS. AS *CYPHER,* I'M PART OF A TEAM THAT'S BEEN TO THE STARS-- I'VE MET THE NORSE GODS IN ASGARD--
-- I'VE HELPED SAVE THE WHOLE *WORLD!*
AND I CAN'T TELL *ANYONE* ABOUT IT!!
NOT A WORD, NOT EVEN TO MY PARENTS.
BECAUSE I'M AFRAID THEY'LL THINK I'M CRACKERS--OR, WORSE, COME AFTER ME AS PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE.
WHEN I'M IN TOWN, HANGING OUT--WITH KIDS WHO WERE MY PALS BEFORE I TRANSFERRED HERE--
--I DON'T FIT IN.
THE STUFF THEY TALK ABOUT, IT DOESN'T HAVE MUCH MEANING FOR ME ANYMORE. SO THEY FIGURE I'VE TURNED INTO A SNOB.
IT'S LIKE, THE ONLY PEOPLE I CAN TRUST AS FRIENDS--THE ONLY ONES I'M ALLOWED TO EVEN *KNOW*--ARE IN THIS SCHOOL.
XAVIER'S

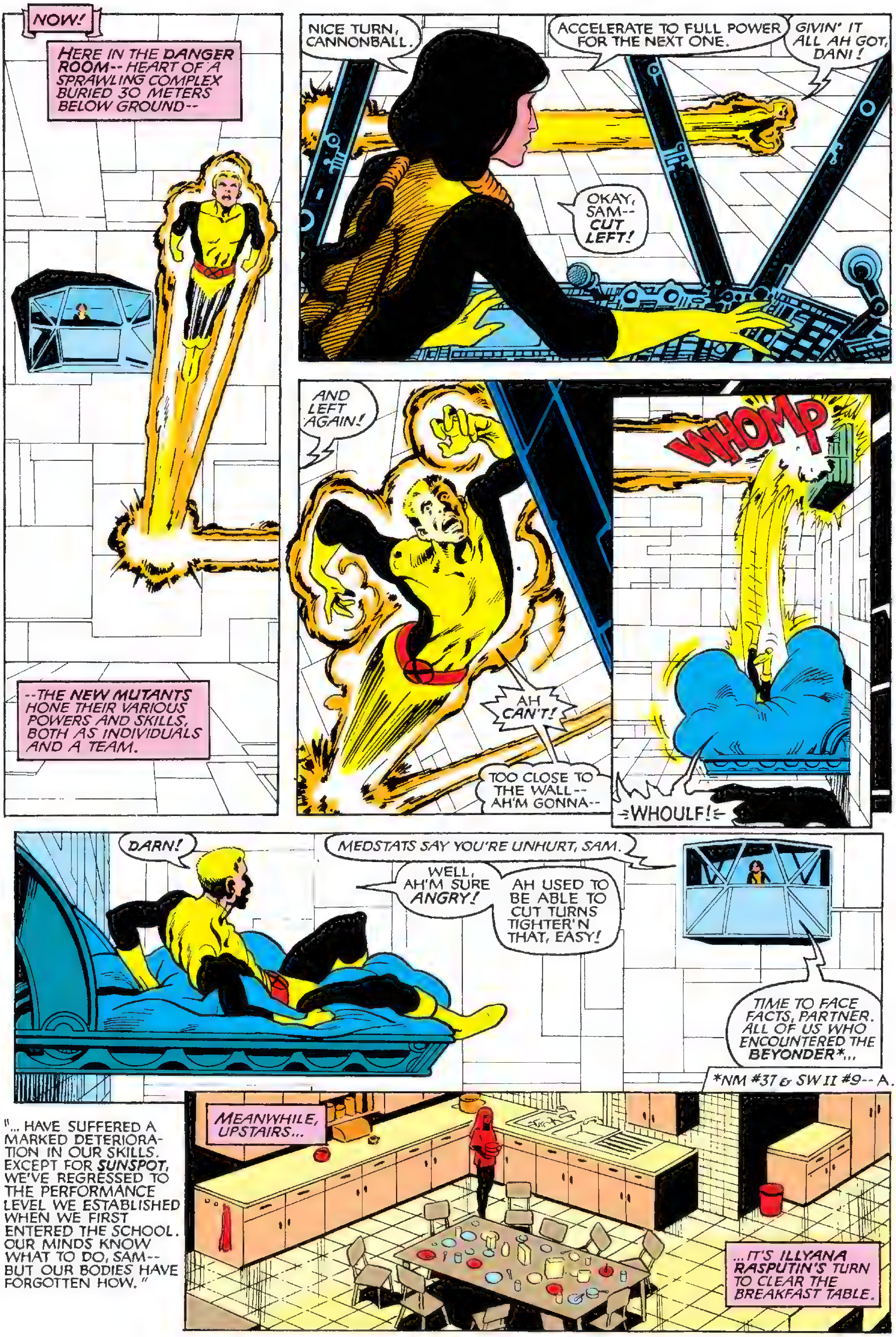

I FEEL LIKE AN OUTCAST.
OR A CONVICT, IN THIS PRISON FOR LIFE.
YOU THINK YOU'RE ALONE IN THAT REGARD, DOUGLAS?
A WHILE BACK, I ASKED MYSELF, WHICH AM I-- CHEYENNE, MUTANT, VALKYRIE, PLAIN OLD ORDINARY GIRL?
I STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT THE ANSWER. MAYBE I NEVER WILL.
MY POWER AS A VALKYRIE ALLOWS ME TO SEE WHO'S ABOUT TO DIE, AND IF I CHOOSE, I CAN BATTLE DEATH TO SAVE THEM. BUT EVEN WHEN I WIN, I'M ONLY DELAYING THE INEVITABLE. NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I CAN'T KEEP PEOPLE ALIVE FOREVER.
HOW D'YOU THINK THAT MAKES *ME* FEEL?!
EACH MORNING, I WONDER IF I'LL SEE THE REAPER'S SHADOW ON THE FACE OF SOMEONE I CARE FOR, AND FOR THAT MOMENT, I'M SO *SCARED*...
XAVIER
I JUST WANT TO RUN AWAY AND HIDE.
BUT *MIRAGE* IS CO-LEADER OF THE NEW MUTANTS. I *CAN'T* DENY THAT RESPONSIBILITY, ANY MORE THAN I CAN MY POWER.
WE'RE ALL OF US OUTCASTS, DOUG. WE CAN EITHER GIVE UP-- ALLOW SELF-PITY TO GROW INTO A BITTERNESS THAT'LL EVENTUALLY EAT US UP INSIDE--
--OR MAKE THE BEST OF THINGS, NO MATTER WHAT.
XAVIER
ME, I COME FROM A PROUD, STUBBORN STOCK.
THE CHEYENNE HAVE BEEN BEATEN, BUT WE DON'T SURRENDER.
WHICH'LL IT BE FOR YOU?
XAVIER

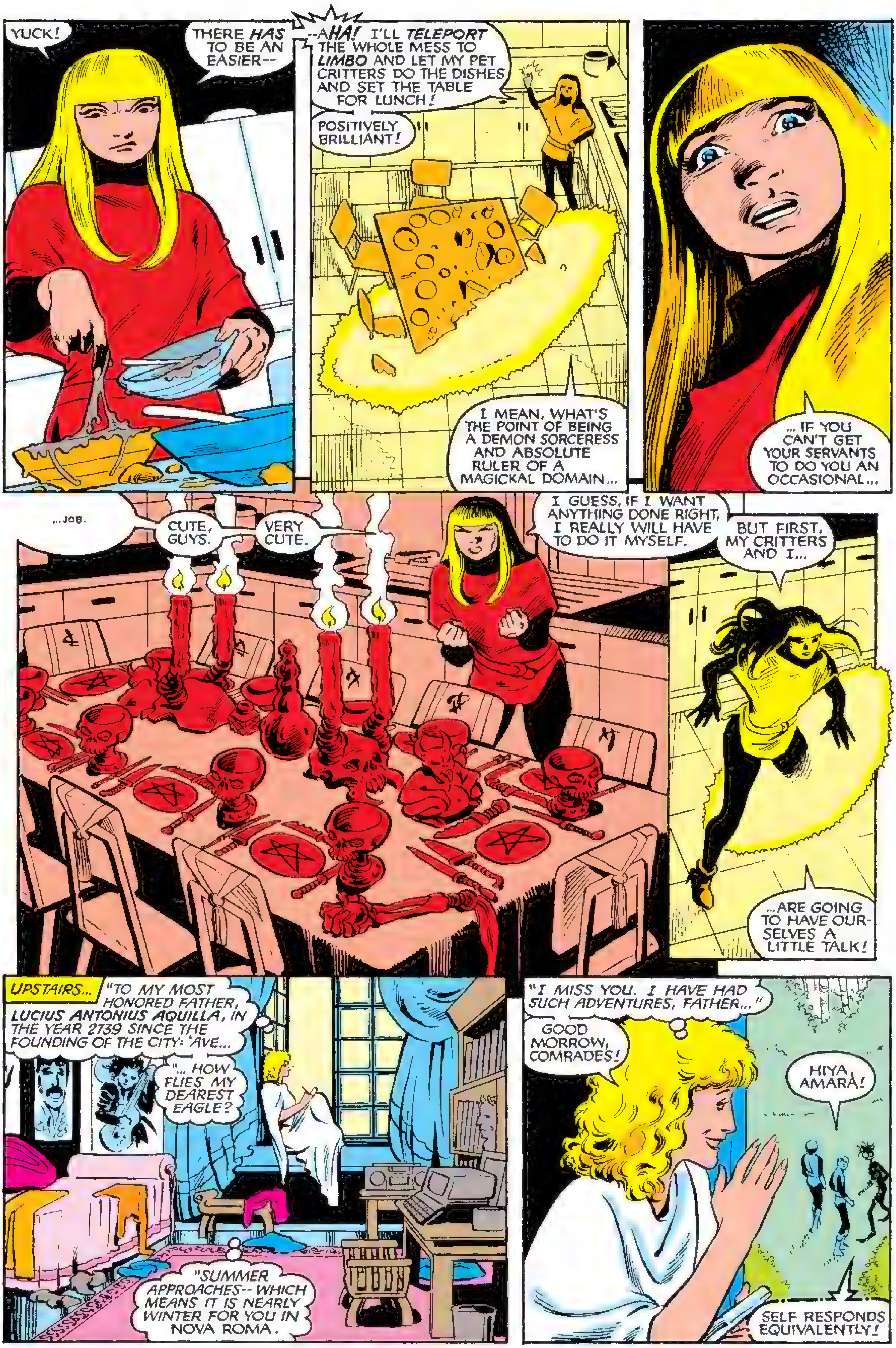

LAST WEEK.
ACROSS THE WORLD...
... A NEW ANIMATED TELEVISION SERIES...
MEGGAN-- THAT "PSYLOCKE" CHARACTER-- IT'S **BETSY!!**
... MAKES IT'S DEBUT.
GET 'EM, SPIRAL!
LEGGO!
DARLA'S IN LOVE AGAIN!
**BORRRING!**
YUCKO!
MOJO-- MY HERO!!!
ENTITLED WILDWAYS...
I'M SPIRAL!
AND I, GENTLE-BEINGS, AM MOJO LIFE-BRINGER!
AND I'M PSYLOCKE-- WELCOME TO OUR WORLD!
...IT'S AN INSTANT, RUNAWAY SUCCESS!
YO, BOBBY-- AH THOUGHT ***MAGNUM, P.I.*** WAS YOUR FAVORITE SHOW?!
NOT ANYMORE, SAM. THE POOR BOY IS **HOOKED!**
PSYLOCKE IS SO BEAUTIFUL...
...LIKE AN ANGEL!
LEONG, NGA-- **DINNER!**
UN MOMENT, SHAN!
WHEN OUR TV FRIENDS GO HOME!

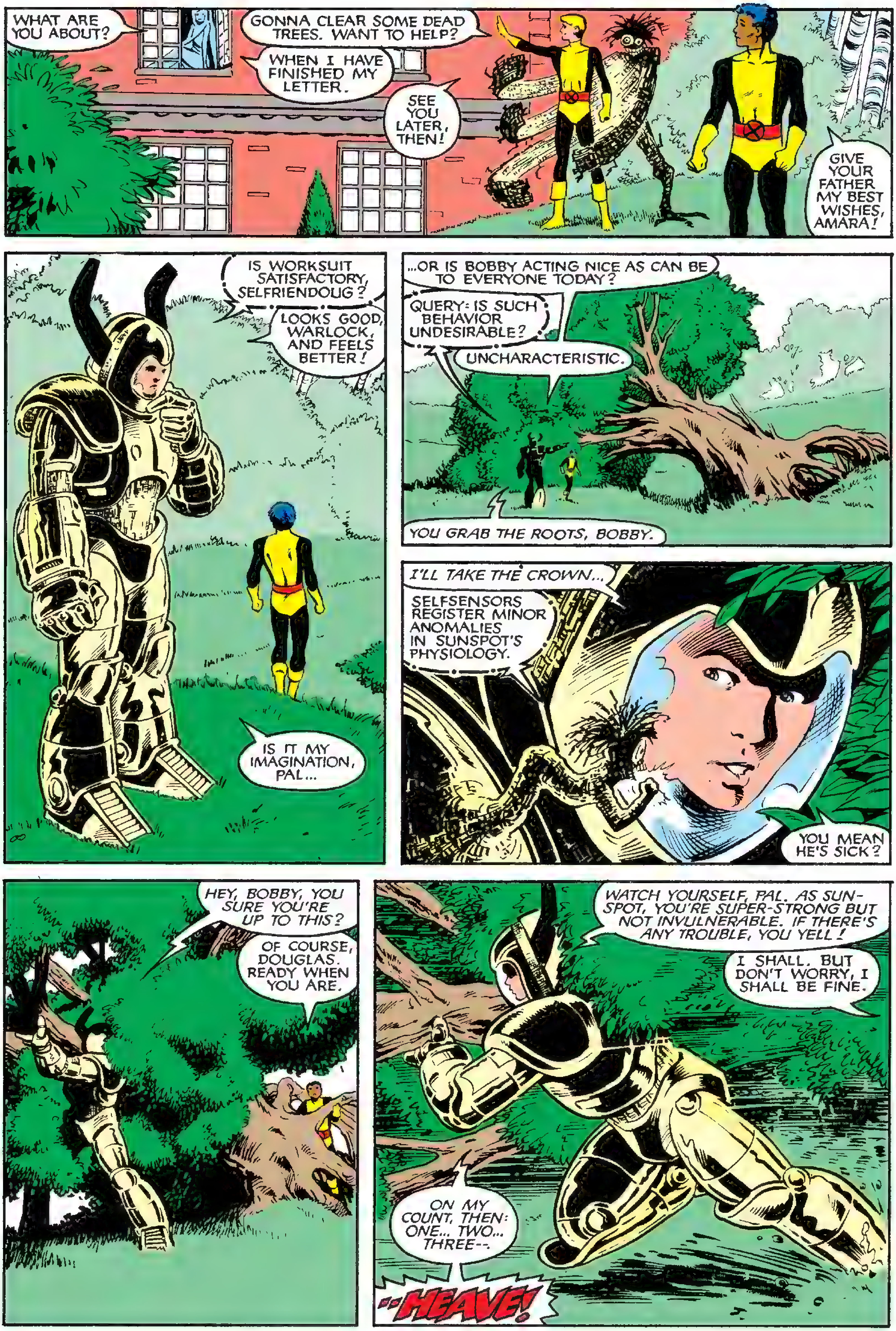

LAST NIGHT.
THIS IS THE LOWER EAST SIDE OF MANHATTAN, A NEIGHBORHOOD CALLED "ALPHABET CITY."
IT'S SEEN BETTER DAYS...
...AS HAS THIS LONG ABANDONED PUBLIC SCHOOL.
SHBOOOM!
BETSY?!
IT'S TAKEN ME MONTHS TO TRACK YOU DOWN, BUT I KNOW YOU'RE HERE!
IF YOU'VE BEEN HARMED-- IN ANY WAY--
--I'LL MAKE YOUR KIDNAPERS...
...WISH THEY'D NEVER BEEN BORN!
THE COWARDLY SWINE HAVE BEEN WARNED.
NOW TO MAKE THEM SCARED.
KRUMP
RKOW!
HIS NAME IS BRIAN BRADDOCK.
A DOSE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE...
BETTER KNOWN AS CAPTAIN BRITAIN.
...TO GO WITH THE REAL THING.
SBAM!

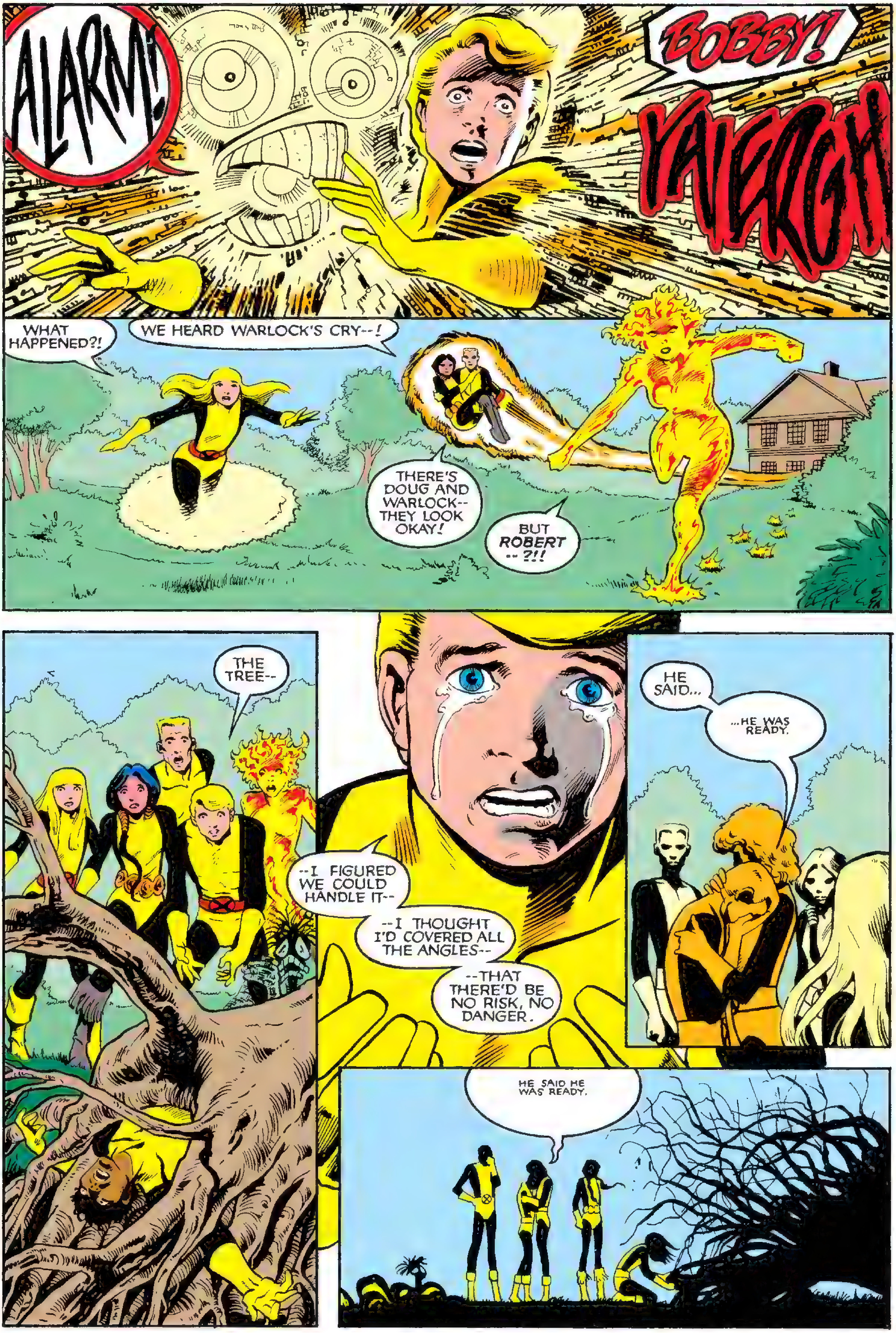

HE IS A HERO...
...POSSESSED OF POWER SUFFICIENT TO LITERALLY MOVE MOUNTAINS.
IT WILL NOT SAVE HIM.
BRIAN!
!?!
HOW DARE YOU MAKE SUCH A MESS?!
NO!
WE RAISED YOU BETTER THAN THAT, YOUNG MAN!
IT CAN'T BE POSSIBLE! THIS IS MADNESS!!
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF.
NO--PLEASE--YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I CAN EXPLAIN!
I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING WRONG, I'VE COME TO RESCUE BETSY!
IT'S YOU, BRIAN, WHO IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.
I'M SORRY.
PLEASE, DON'T BE ANGRY.
WE CANNOT BEGIN TO TELL YOU HOW BITTERLY YOU'VE DISAPPOINTED US.
I WON'T DO IT AGAIN!
OF THAT, MY LAD, YOU MAY BE CERTAIN.
MUMMY-- DADDY--
--FORGIVE ME--PLEASE--FROM NOW ON, I PROMISE--
--I'LL BE A GOOD BOY!

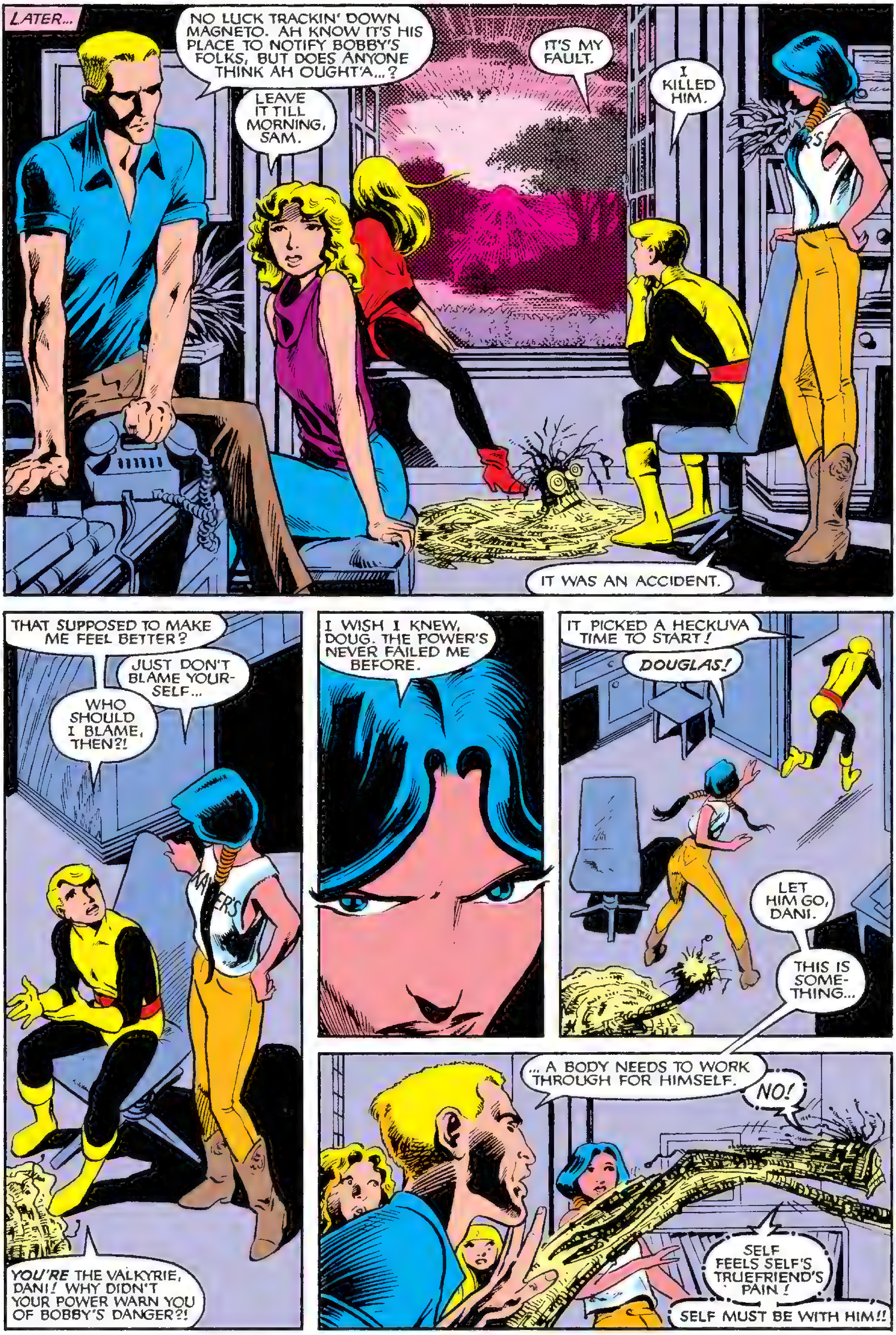

LAST NIGHT.
AN HOUR'S DRIVE NORTH OF THAT DERELICT SCHOOL...
...ALL IS QUIET AND STILL AND WONDROUSLY PEACEFUL AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S.
BUT, AMIDST THE SILENCE...
...SOMEONE STIRS...
HELLO-- DO YOU WANT TO WALK THE WILDWAYS?
YES--
--oh, PLEASE--
--YES!
WELL THEN, YOUNGSTER...
...WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!!
AND, IN A BURST OF LIGHT AND LAUGHTER...
BOBBY DACOSTA--SUNSPOT--MAKES HIS CHOICE...
...LEAVING THE VENERABLE MANSION ONCE MORE STILL...
...AS IF NOTHING WHATSOEVER HAS HAPPENED.

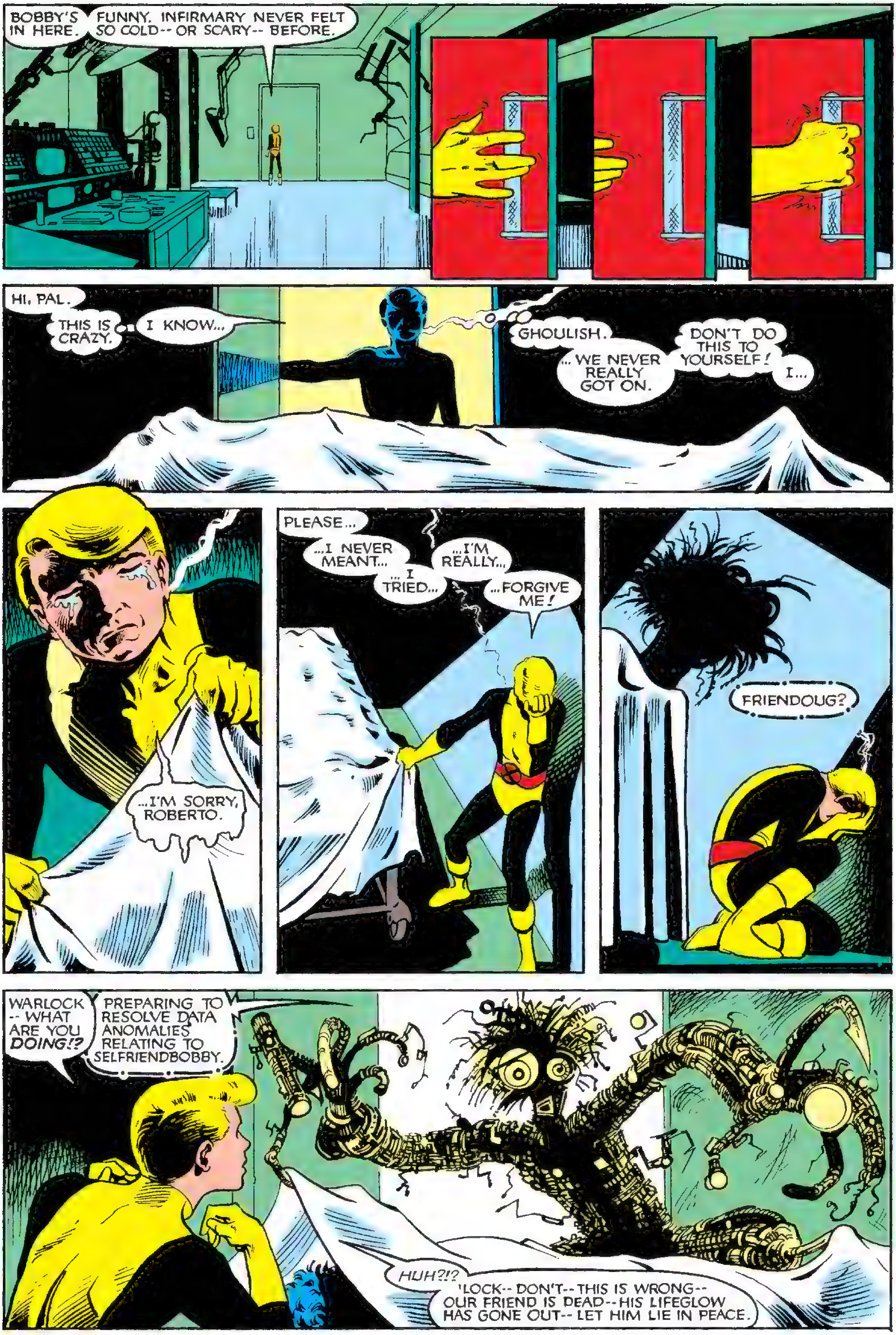

NOW!
HERE IN THE DANGER ROOM-- HEART OF A SPRAWLING COMPLEX BURIED 30 METERS BELOW GROUND--
--THE NEW MUTANTS HONE THEIR VARIOUS POWERS AND SKILLS, BOTH AS INDIVIDUALS AND A TEAM.
NICE TURN, CANNONBALL.
ACCELERATE TO FULL POWER FOR THE NEXT ONE.
GIVIN' IT ALL AH GOT, DANI!
OKAY, SAM-- CUT LEFT!
AND LEFT AGAIN!
AH CAN'T!
TOO CLOSE TO THE WALL-- AH'M GONNA--
WHOMP
WHOULF!
DARN!
MEDSTATS SAY YOU'RE UNHURT, SAM.
WELL, AH'M SURE ANGRY!
AH USED TO BE ABLE TO CUT TURNS TIGHTER'N THAT, EASY!
TIME TO FACE FACTS, PARTNER. ALL OF US WHO ENCOUNTERED THE BEYONDER*...
*NM #37 & SW II #9-- A.
"... HAVE SUFFERED A MARKED DETERIORATION IN OUR SKILLS. EXCEPT FOR SUNSPOT, WE'VE REGRESSED TO THE PERFORMANCE LEVEL WE ESTABLISHED WHEN WE FIRST ENTERED THE SCHOOL. OUR MINDS KNOW WHAT TO DO, SAM-- BUT OUR BODIES HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW."
MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS...
...IT'S ILLYANA RASPUTIN'S TURN TO CLEAR THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

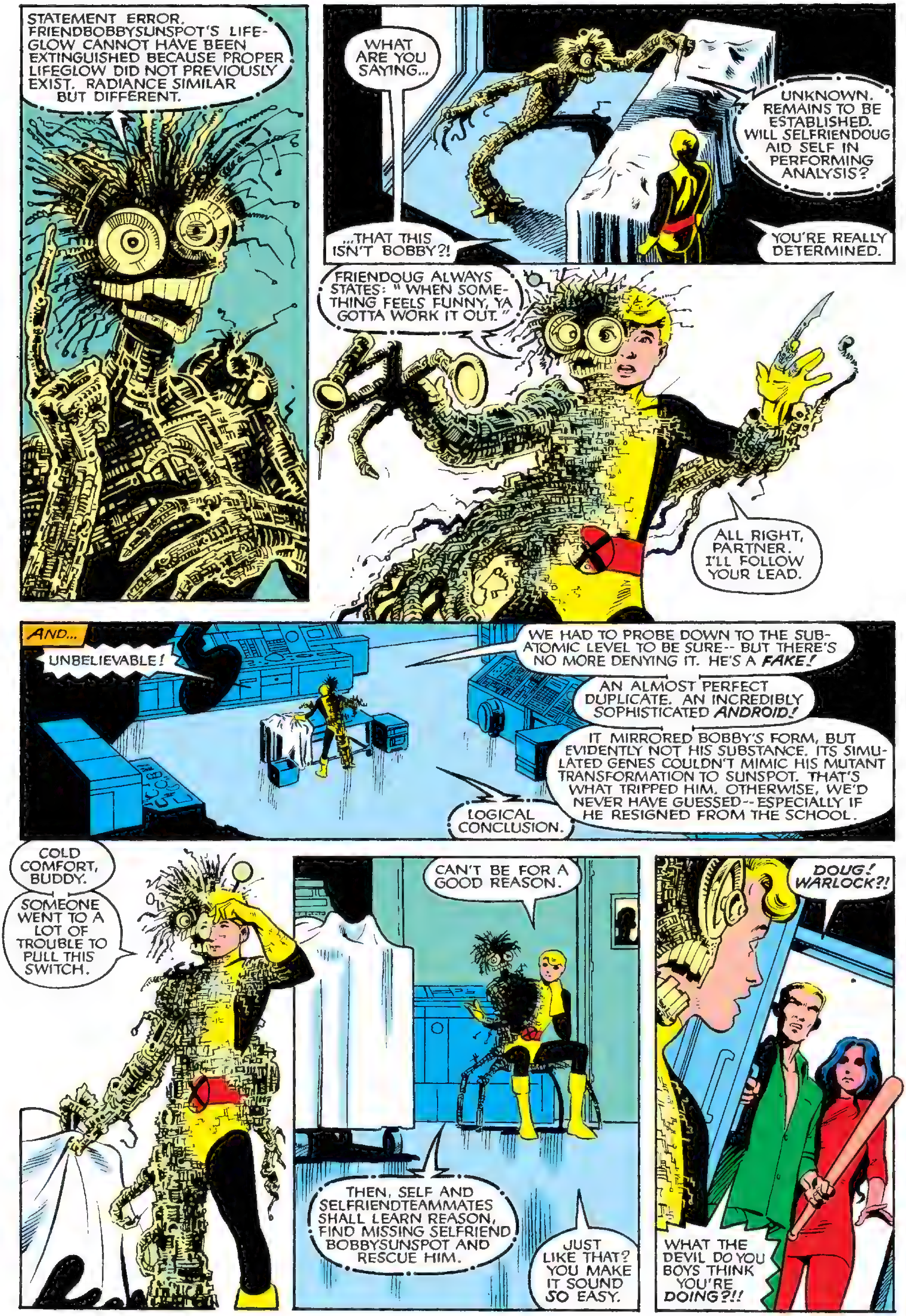

YUCK!
THERE *HAS* TO BE AN EASIER--
--A*HA!* I'LL *TELEPORT* THE WHOLE MESS TO *LIMBO* AND LET MY PET CRITTERS DO THE DISHES AND SET THE TABLE FOR LUNCH!
POSITIVELY BRILLIANT!
I MEAN, WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING A DEMON SORCERESS AND ABSOLUTE RULER OF A MAGICKAL DOMAIN...
...IF YOU CAN'T GET YOUR SERVANTS TO DO YOU AN OCCASIONAL...
...JOB.
CUTE, GUYS.
VERY CUTE.
I GUESS, IF I WANT ANYTHING DONE RIGHT, I REALLY WILL HAVE TO DO IT MYSELF.
BUT FIRST, MY CRITTERS AND I...
...ARE GOING TO HAVE OURSELVES A LITTLE TALK!
UPSTAIRS...
"TO MY MOST HONORED FATHER, *LUCIUS ANTONIUS AQUILLA*, IN THE YEAR 2739 SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY: 'AVE...
"... HOW FLIES MY DEAREST EAGLE?
"SUMMER APPROACHES-- WHICH MEANS IT IS NEARLY WINTER FOR YOU IN NOVA ROMA.
"I MISS YOU. I HAVE HAD SUCH ADVENTURES, FATHER..."
GOOD MORROW, COMRADES!
HIYA, AMARA!
SELF RESPONDS EQUIVALENTLY!

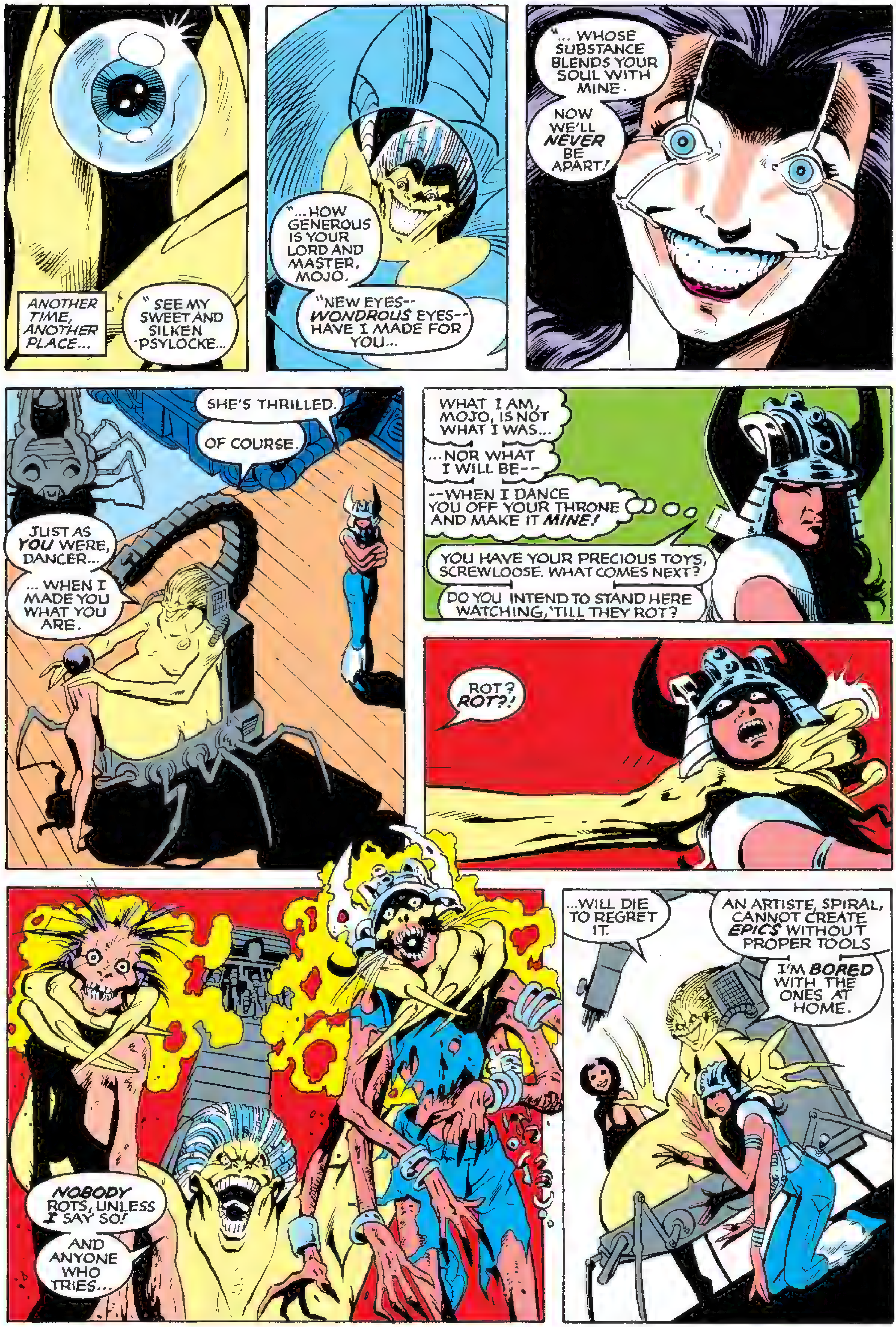

WHAT ARE YOU ABOUT?
GONNA CLEAR SOME DEAD TREES. WANT TO HELP?
WHEN I HAVE FINISHED MY LETTER.
SEE YOU LATER, THEN!
GIVE YOUR FATHER MY BEST WISHES, AMARA!
IS WORKSUIT SATISFACTORY, SELFRIENDDOUG?
LOOKS GOOD, WARLOCK, AND FEELS BETTER!
IS IT MY IMAGINATION, PAL...
...OR IS BOBBY ACTING NICE AS CAN BE TO EVERYONE TODAY?
QUERY: IS SUCH BEHAVIOR UNDESIRABLE?
UNCHARACTERISTIC.
YOU GRAB THE ROOTS, BOBBY.
I'LL TAKE THE CROWN...
SELFSENSORS REGISTER MINOR ANOMALIES IN SUNSPOT'S PHYSIOLOGY.
YOU MEAN HE'S SICK?
HEY, BOBBY, YOU SURE YOU'RE UP TO THIS?
OF COURSE, DOUGLAS. READY WHEN YOU ARE.
WATCH YOURSELF, PAL. AS SUNSPOT, YOU'RE SUPER-STRONG BUT NOT INVULNERABLE. IF THERE'S ANY TROUBLE, YOU YELL!
I SHALL. BUT DON'T WORRY, I SHALL BE FINE.
ON MY COUNT, THEN: ONE... TWO... THREE--.
--HEAVE!

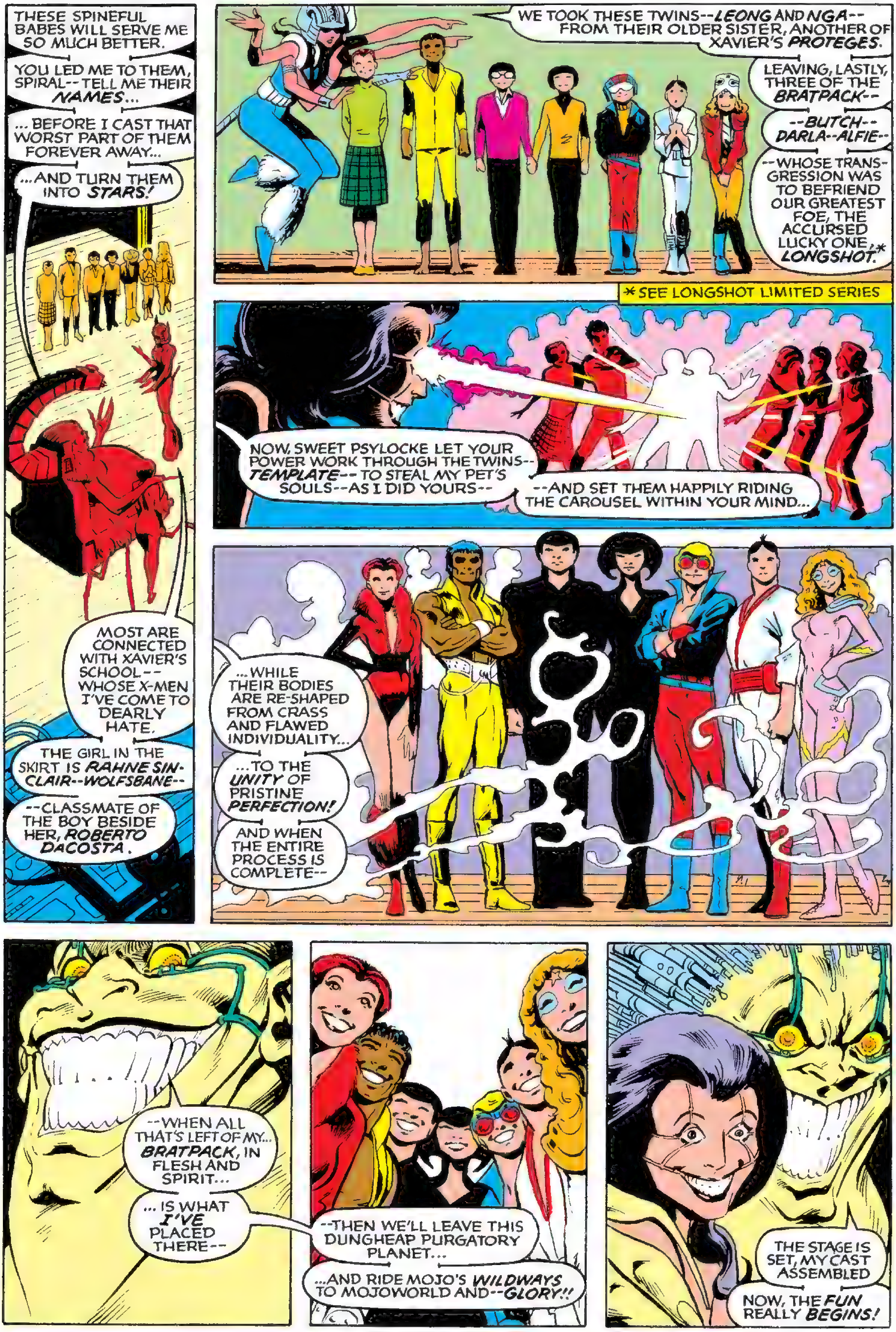

ALARM!
BOBBY!
YAIEEGH
WHAT HAPPENED?!
WE HEARD WARLOCK'S CRY--!
THERE'S DOUG AND WARLOCK--THEY LOOK OKAY!
BUT *ROBERT*--?!!
THE TREE--
--I FIGURED WE COULD HANDLE IT--
--I THOUGHT I'D COVERED ALL THE ANGLES--
--THAT THERE'D BE NO RISK, NO DANGER.
HE SAID...
...HE WAS READY.
HE SAID HE WAS READY.

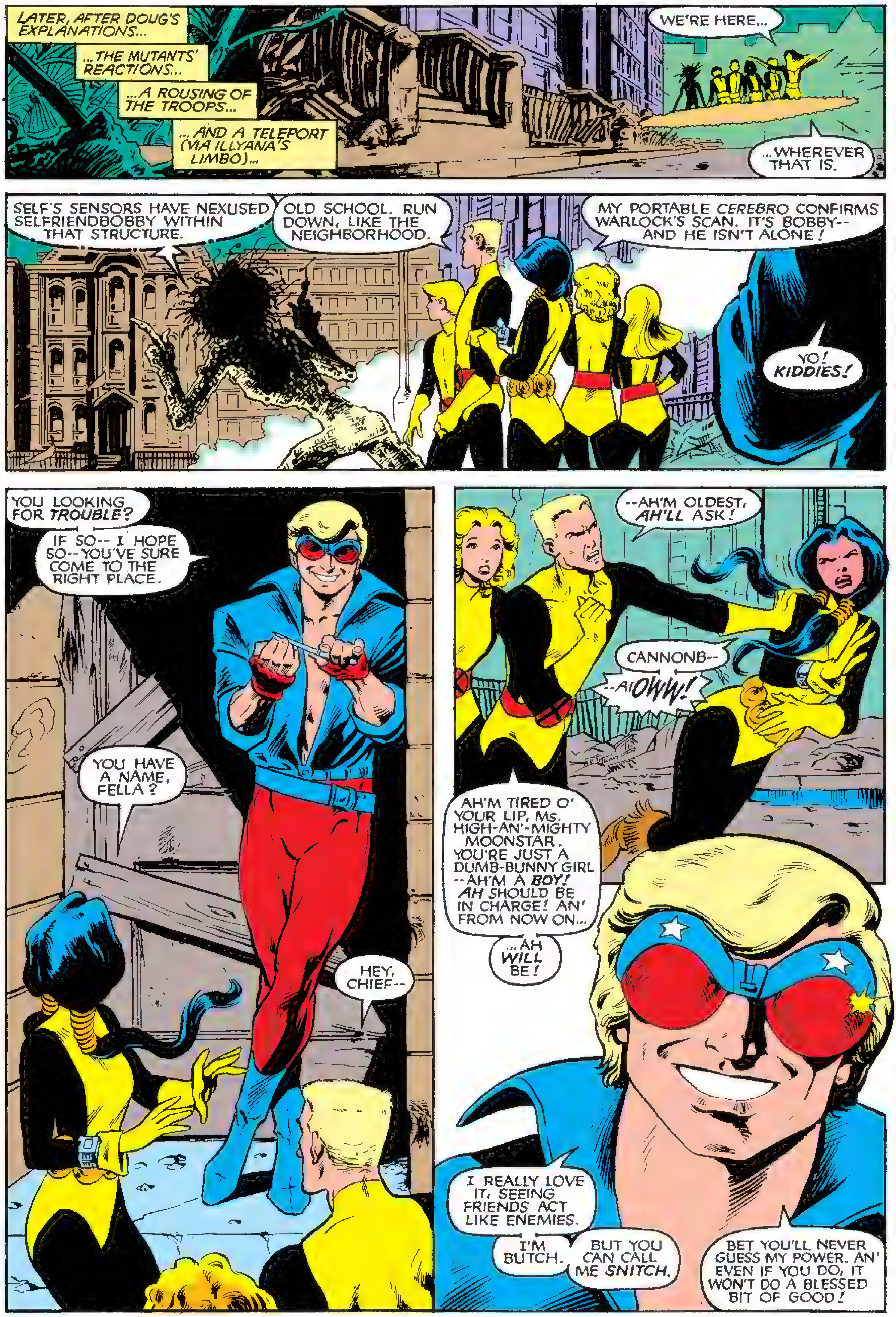

LATER...
NO LUCK TRACKIN' DOWN MAGNETO. AH KNOW IT'S HIS PLACE TO NOTIFY BOBBY'S FOLKS, BUT DOES ANYONE THINK AH OUGHT'A...?
LEAVE IT TILL MORNING, SAM.
IT'S MY FAULT.
I KILLED HIM.
IT WAS AN ACCIDENT.
THAT SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER?
JUST DON'T BLAME YOURSELF...
WHO SHOULD I BLAME, THEN?!
YOU'RE THE VALKYRIE, DANI! WHY DIDN'T YOUR POWER WARN YOU OF BOBBY'S DANGER?!
I WISH I KNEW, DOUG. THE POWER'S NEVER FAILED ME BEFORE.
IT PICKED A HECKUVA TIME TO START!
DOUGLAS!
LET HIM GO, DANI.
THIS IS SOMETHING...
... A BODY NEEDS TO WORK THROUGH FOR HIMSELF.
NO!
SELF FEELS SELF'S TRUEFRIEND'S PAIN!
SELF MUST BE WITH HIM!!

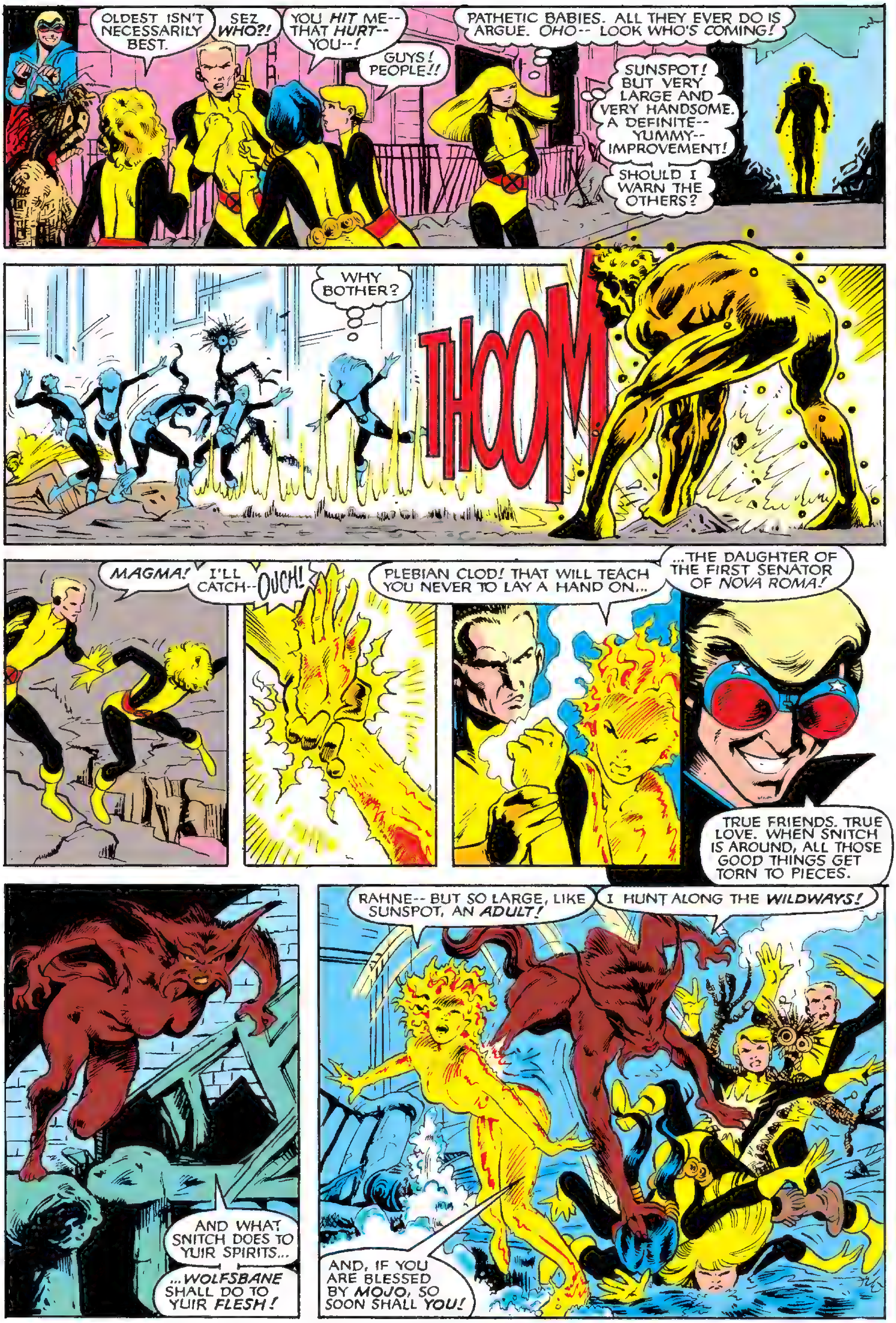

BOBBY'S IN HERE.
FUNNY. INFIRMARY NEVER FELT SO COLD-- OR SCARY-- BEFORE.
HI, PAL.
THIS IS CRAZY.
I KNOW...
GHOULISH.
...WE NEVER REALLY GOT ON.
DON'T DO THIS TO YOURSELF!
I...
...I'M SORRY, ROBERTO.
PLEASE...
...I NEVER MEANT...
...I TRIED...
...I'M REALLY...
...FORGIVE ME!
FRIENDOUG?
WARLOCK -- WHAT ARE YOU *DOING!?*
PREPARING TO RESOLVE DATA ANOMALIES RELATING TO SELFRIENDBOBBY.
*HUH?!?*
'LOCK-- DON'T-- THIS IS WRONG-- OUR FRIEND IS DEAD--HIS LIFEGLOW HAS GONE OUT-- LET HIM LIE IN PEACE.

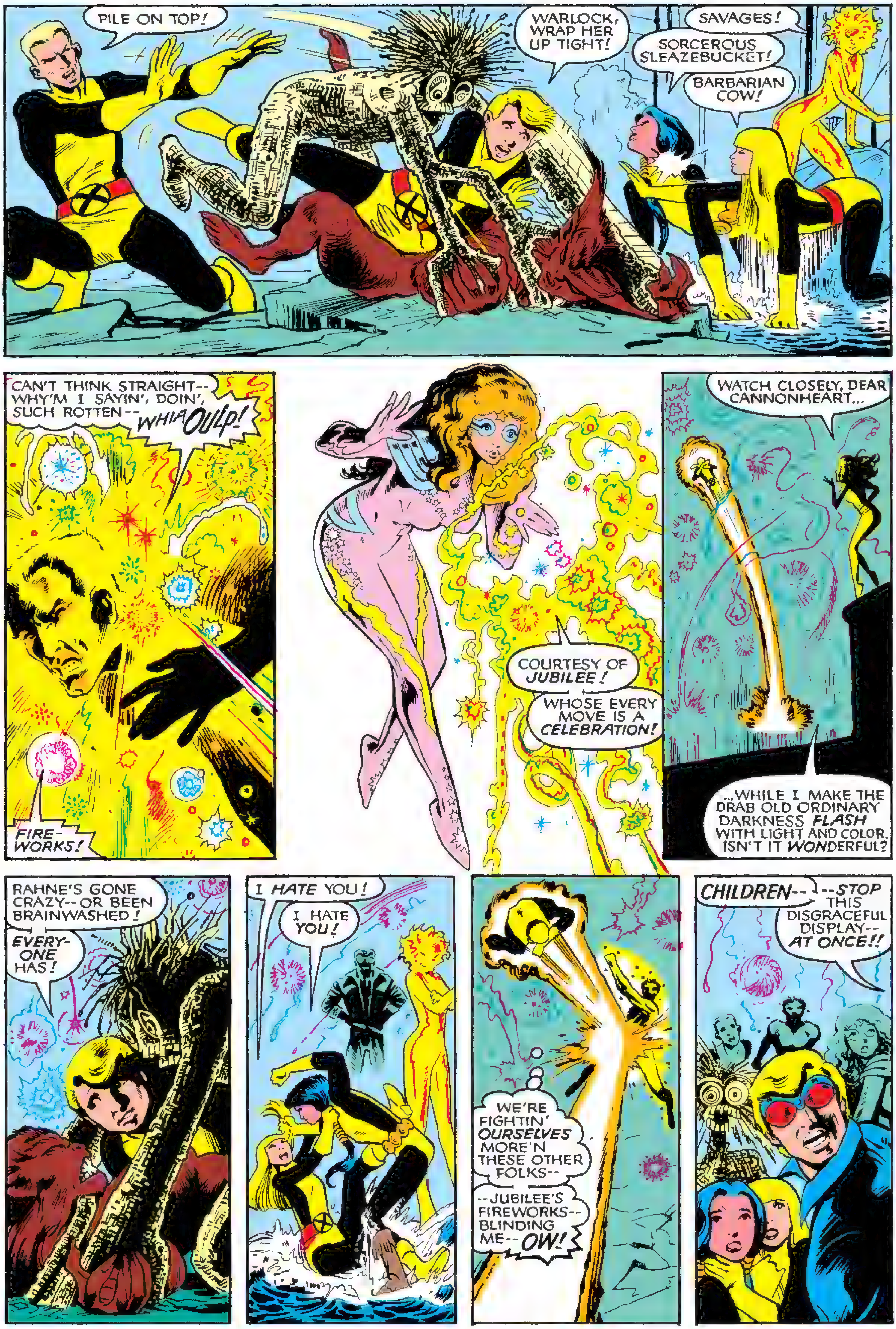

STATEMENT ERROR. FRIENDBOBBYSUNSPOT'S LIFEGLOW CANNOT HAVE BEEN EXTINGUISHED BECAUSE PROPER LIFEGLOW DID NOT PREVIOUSLY EXIST. RADIANCE SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING...
...THAT THIS ISN'T BOBBY?!
UNKNOWN. REMAINS TO BE ESTABLISHED. WILL SELFRIENDOUG AID SELF IN PERFORMING ANALYSIS?
YOU'RE REALLY DETERMINED.
FRIENDOUG ALWAYS STATES: " WHEN SOMETHING FEELS FUNNY, YA GOTTA WORK IT OUT."
ALL RIGHT, PARTNER. I'LL FOLLOW YOUR LEAD.
AND...
UNBELIEVABLE!
WE HAD TO PROBE DOWN TO THE SUBATOMIC LEVEL TO BE SURE-- BUT THERE'S NO MORE DENYING IT. HE'S A *FAKE!*
AN ALMOST PERFECT DUPLICATE. AN INCREDIBLY SOPHISTICATED *ANDROID!*
IT MIRRORED BOBBY'S FORM, BUT EVIDENTLY NOT HIS SUBSTANCE. ITS SIMULATED GENES COULDN'T MIMIC HIS MUTANT TRANSFORMATION TO SUNSPOT. THAT'S WHAT TRIPPED HIM. OTHERWISE, WE'D NEVER HAVE GUESSED--ESPECIALLY IF HE RESIGNED FROM THE SCHOOL.
LOGICAL CONCLUSION.
COLD COMFORT, BUDDY.
SOMEONE WENT TO A LOT OF TROUBLE TO PULL THIS SWITCH.
CAN'T BE FOR A GOOD REASON.
THEN, SELF AND SELFRIENDTEAMMATES SHALL LEARN REASON, FIND MISSING SELFRIEND BOBBYSUNSPOT AND RESCUE HIM.
JUST LIKE THAT? YOU MAKE IT SOUND *SO* EASY.
*DOUG! WARLOCK?!*
WHAT THE DEVIL *DO* YOU BOYS THINK YOU'RE *DOING?!!*

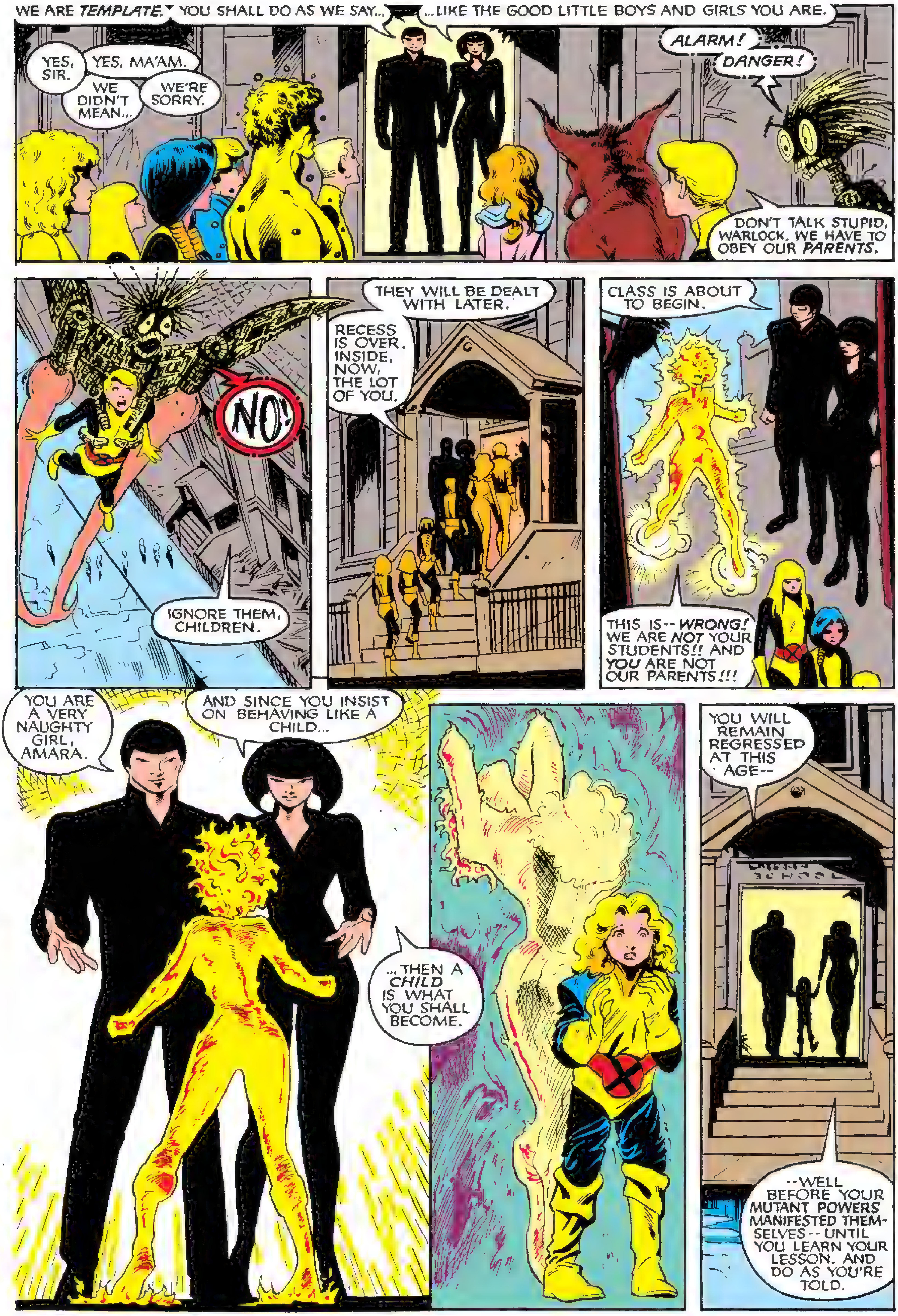

ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE...
"SEE MY SWEET AND SILKEN PSYLOCKE...
"...HOW GENEROUS IS YOUR LORD AND MASTER, MOJO.
"NEW EYES-- WONDROUS EYES-- HAVE I MADE FOR YOU...
"...WHOSE SUBSTANCE BLENDS YOUR SOUL WITH MINE.
NOW WE'LL NEVER BE APART!
SHE'S THRILLED.
OF COURSE.
JUST AS YOU WERE, DANCER...
...WHEN I MADE YOU WHAT YOU ARE.
WHAT I AM, MOJO, IS NOT WHAT I WAS...
...NOR WHAT I WILL BE--
--WHEN I DANCE YOU OFF YOUR THRONE AND MAKE IT MINE!
YOU HAVE YOUR PRECIOUS TOYS, SCREWLOOSE. WHAT COMES NEXT?
DO YOU INTEND TO STAND HERE WATCHING, 'TILL THEY ROT?
ROT? ROT?!
NOBODY ROTS, UNLESS I SAY SO!
AND ANYONE WHO TRIES...
...WILL DIE TO REGRET IT.
AN ARTISTE, SPIRAL, CANNOT CREATE EPICS WITHOUT PROPER TOOLS.
I'M BORED WITH THE ONES AT HOME.

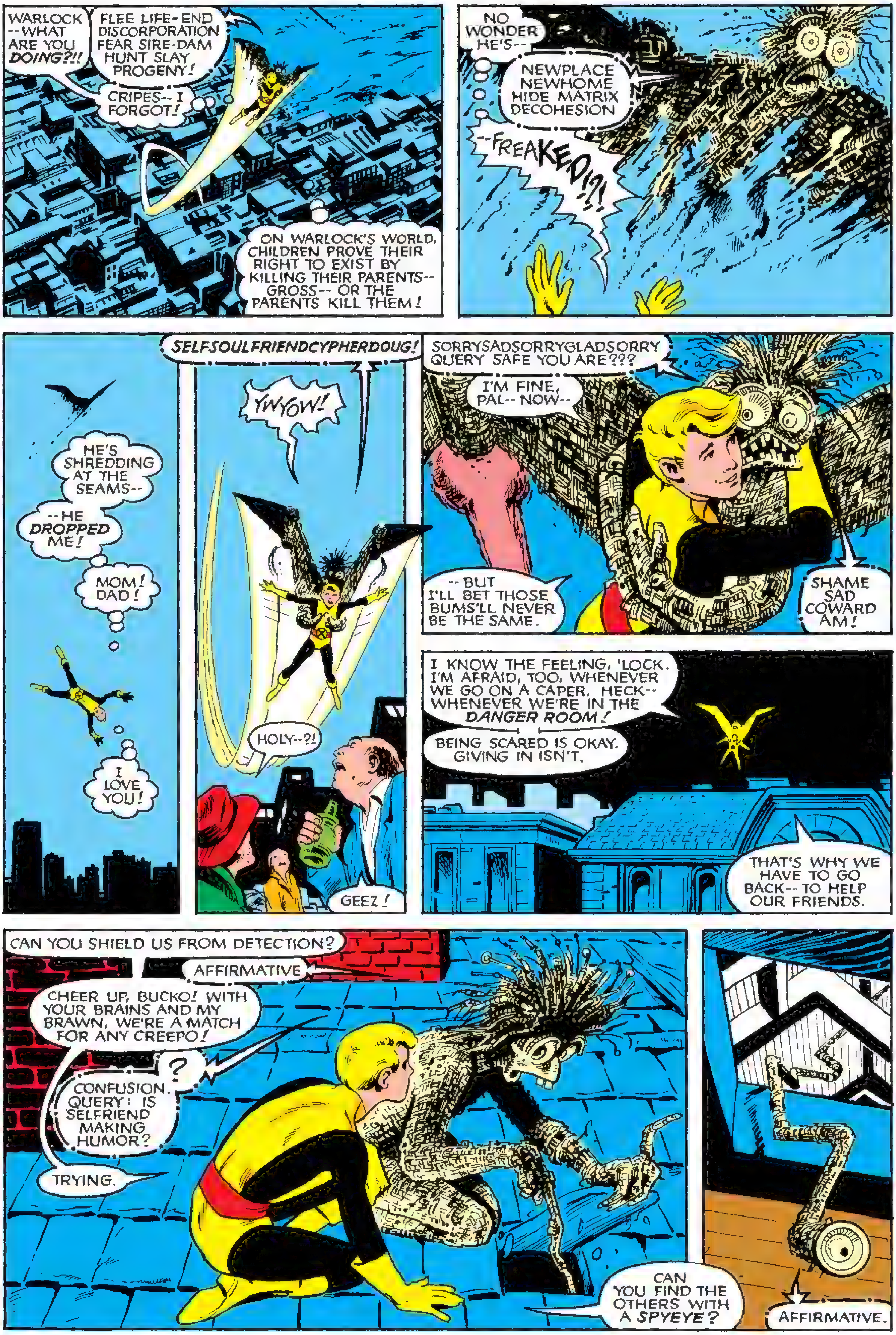

THESE SPINEFUL BABES WILL SERVE ME SO MUCH BETTER.
YOU LED ME TO THEM, SPIRAL--TELL ME THEIR NAMES...
...BEFORE I CAST THAT WORST PART OF THEM FOREVER AWAY...
...AND TURN THEM INTO STARS!
WE TOOK THESE TWINS--LEONG AND NGA--FROM THEIR OLDER SISTER, ANOTHER OF XAVIER'S PROTEGES.
LEAVING, LASTLY, THREE OF THE BRATPACK--
--BUTCH--DARLA--ALFIE--
--WHOSE TRANSGRESSION WAS TO BEFRIEND OUR GREATEST FOE, THE ACCURSED LUCKY ONE, LONGSHOT.*
*SEE LONGSHOT LIMITED SERIES
MOST ARE CONNECTED WITH XAVIER'S SCHOOL--WHOSE X-MEN I'VE COME TO DEARLY HATE.
THE GIRL IN THE SKIRT IS RAHNE SINCLAIR--WOLFSBANE--
--CLASSMATE OF THE BOY BESIDE HER, ROBERTO DACOSTA.
NOW, SWEET PSYLOCKE LET YOUR POWER WORK THROUGH THE TWINS--TEMPLATE--TO STEAL MY PET'S SOULS--AS I DID YOURS--
--AND SET THEM HAPPILY RIDING THE CAROUSEL WITHIN YOUR MIND...
...WHILE THEIR BODIES ARE RE-SHAPED FROM CRASS AND FLAWED INDIVIDUALITY...
...TO THE UNITY OF PRISTINE PERFECTION!
AND WHEN THE ENTIRE PROCESS IS COMPLETE--
--WHEN ALL THAT'S LEFT OF MY... BRATPACK, IN FLESH AND SPIRIT...
...IS WHAT I'VE PLACED THERE--
--THEN WE'LL LEAVE THIS DUNGHEAP PURGATORY PLANET...
...AND RIDE MOJO'S WILDWAYS TO MOJOWORLD AND--GLORY!!
THE STAGE IS SET, MY CAST ASSEMBLED
NOW, THE FUN REALLY BEGINS!

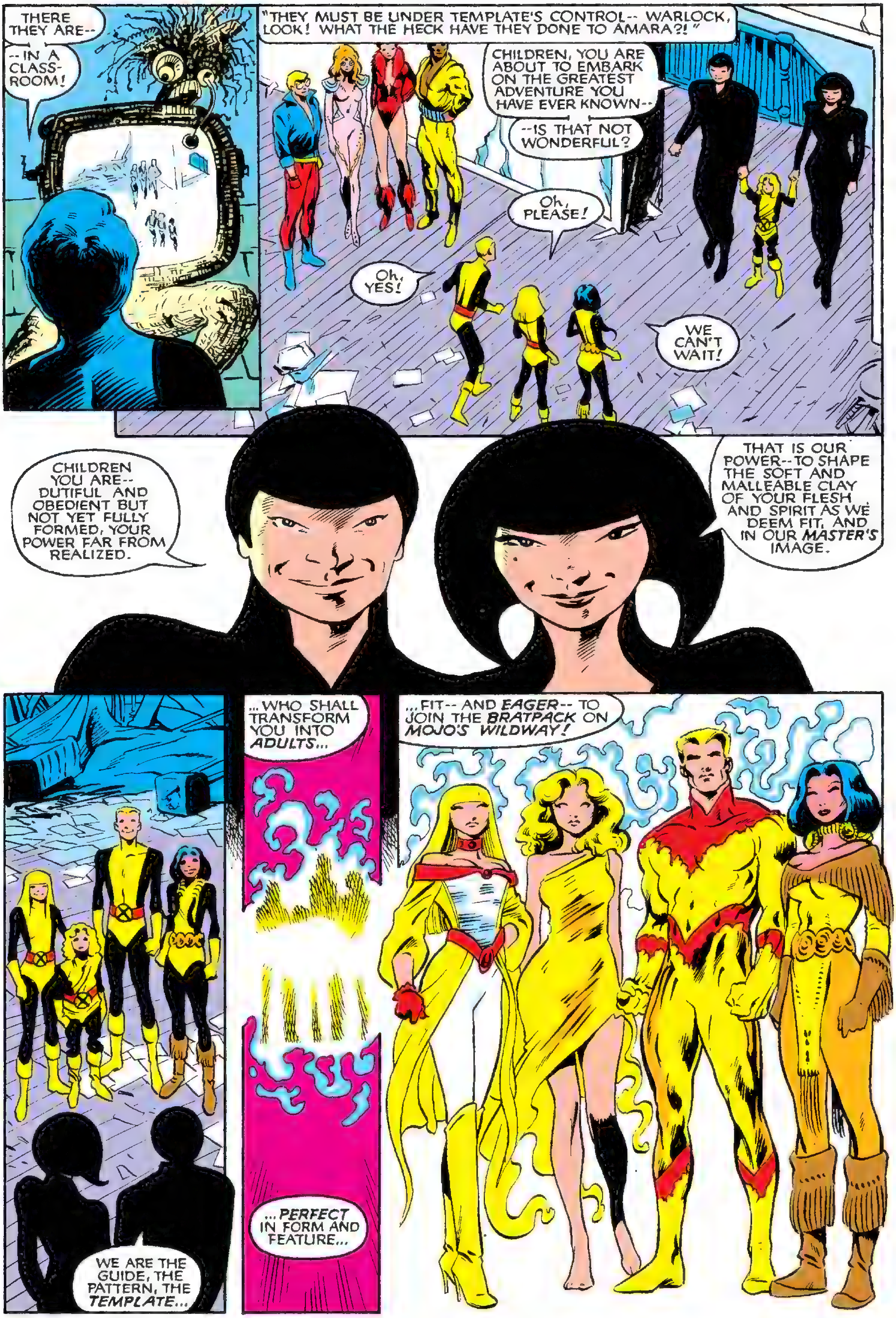

LATER, AFTER DOUG'S EXPLANATIONS...
...THE MUTANTS' REACTIONS...
...A ROUSING OF THE TROOPS...
...AND A TELEPORT (VIA ILLYANA'S LIMBO)...
WE'RE HERE...
...WHEREVER THAT IS.
SELF'S SENSORS HAVE NEXUSED SELFRIENDBOBBY WITHIN THAT STRUCTURE.
OLD SCHOOL. RUN DOWN, LIKE THE NEIGHBORHOOD.
MY PORTABLE *CEREBRO* CONFIRMS WARLOCK'S SCAN. IT'S BOBBY-- AND HE ISN'T ALONE!
YO! **KIDDIES!**
YOU LOOKING FOR ***TROUBLE?***
IF SO-- I HOPE SO--YOU'VE SURE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE.
YOU HAVE A NAME, FELLA?
HEY, CHIEF--
--AH'M OLDEST, ***AH'LL*** ASK!
CANNONB--
--AIOWW!
AH'M TIRED O' YOUR LIP, Ms. HIGH-AN'-MIGHTY MOONSTAR. YOU'RE JUST A DUMB-BUNNY GIRL --AH'M A ***BOY!*** ***AH*** SHOULD BE IN CHARGE! AN' FROM NOW ON...
...AH ***WILL*** BE!
I REALLY LOVE IT, SEEING FRIENDS ACT LIKE ENEMIES.
I'M BUTCH.
BUT YOU CAN CALL ME ***SNITCH.***
BET YOU'LL NEVER GUESS MY POWER. AN' EVEN IF YOU DO, IT WON'T DO A BLESSED BIT OF GOOD!

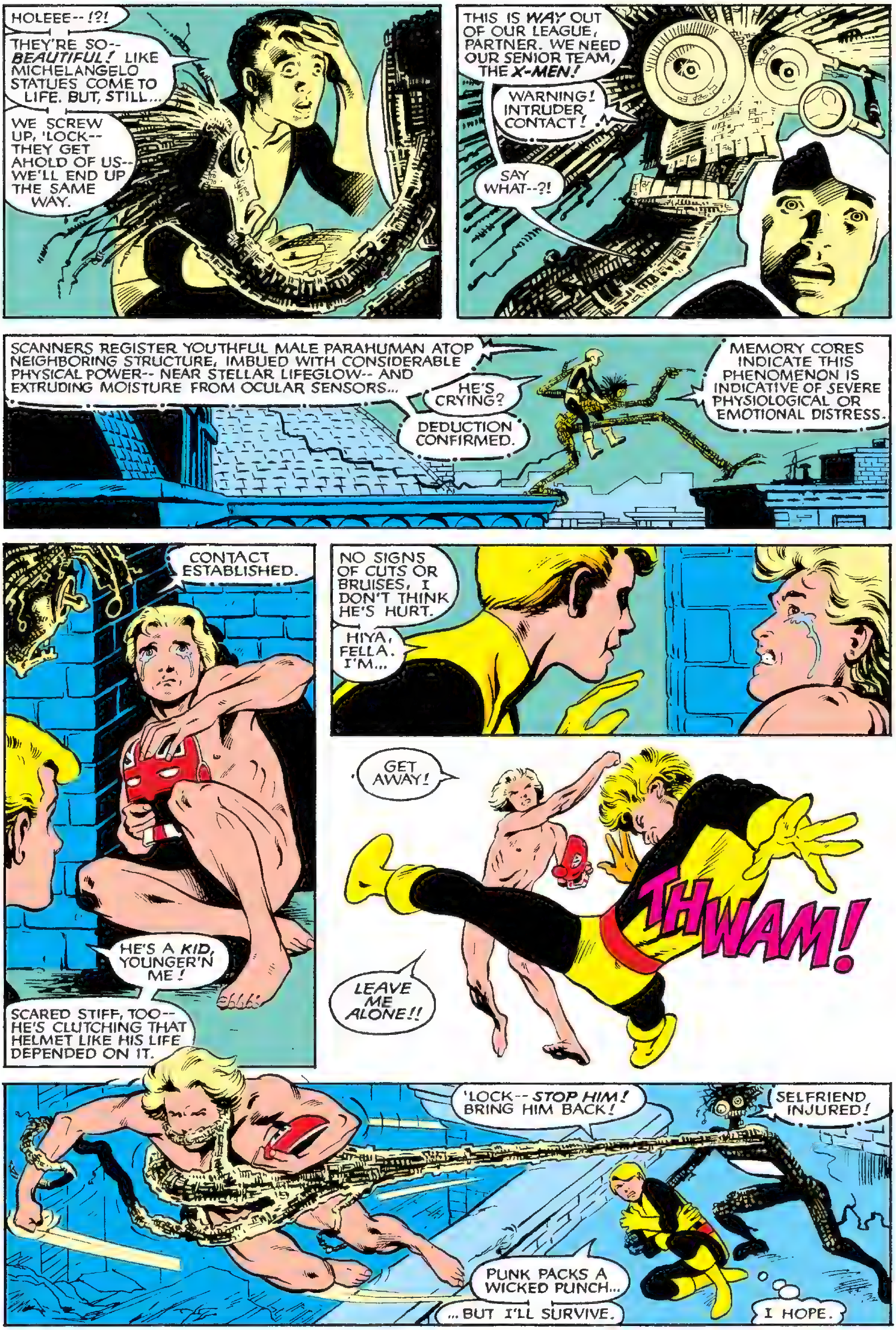

OLDEST ISN'T NECESSARILY BEST.
SEZ *WHO?!*
YOU *HIT* ME-- THAT *HURT*-- YOU--!
GUYS! PEOPLE!!
PATHETIC BABIES. ALL THEY EVER DO IS ARGUE. *OHO*-- LOOK WHO'S COMING!
SUNSPOT! BUT VERY LARGE AND VERY HANDSOME. A DEFINITE-- YUMMY-- IMPROVEMENT!
SHOULD I WARN THE OTHERS?
WHY BOTHER?
THOOM
*MAGMA!*
I'LL CATCH--
OUCH!
PLEBIAN CLOD! THAT WILL TEACH YOU NEVER TO LAY A HAND ON...
...THE DAUGHTER OF THE FIRST SENATOR OF *NOVA ROMA!*
TRUE FRIENDS. TRUE LOVE. WHEN SNITCH IS AROUND, ALL THOSE GOOD THINGS GET TORN TO PIECES.
AND WHAT SNITCH DOES TO YUIR SPIRITS...
...*WOLFSBANE* SHALL DO TO YUIR *FLESH!*
RAHNE-- BUT SO LARGE, LIKE SUNSPOT, AN *ADULT!*
I HUNT ALONG THE *WILDWAYS!*
AND, IF YOU ARE BLESSED BY *MOJO*, SO SOON SHALL *YOU!*

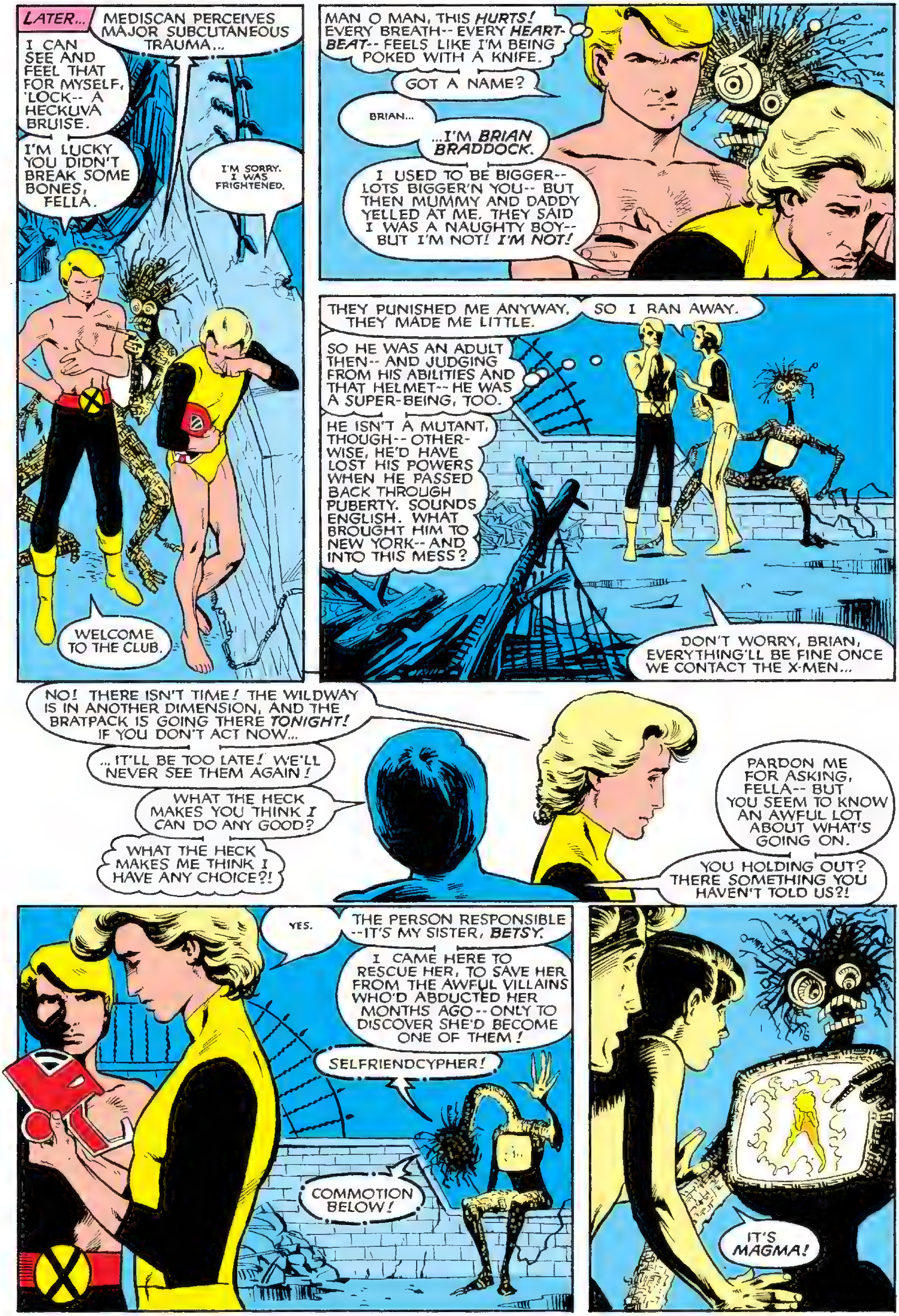

PILE ON TOP!
WARLOCK, WRAP HER UP TIGHT!
SAVAGES!
SORCEROUS SLEAZEBUCKET!
BARBARIAN COW!
CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT-- WHY'M I SAYIN', DOIN', SUCH ROTTEN-- WHIAOULP!
FIRE-WORKS!
COURTESY OF JUBILEE!
WHOSE EVERY MOVE IS A CELEBRATION!
WATCH CLOSELY, DEAR CANNONHEART...
...WHILE I MAKE THE DRAB OLD ORDINARY DARKNESS FLASH WITH LIGHT AND COLOR. ISN'T IT WONDERFUL?
RAHNE'S GONE CRAZY--OR BEEN BRAINWASHED!
EVERYONE HAS!
I HATE YOU!
I HATE YOU!
WE'RE FIGHTIN' OURSELVES MORE'N THESE OTHER FOLKS--
--JUBILEE'S FIREWORKS--BLINDING ME--OW!
CHILDREN--
--STOP THIS DISGRACEFUL DISPLAY--AT ONCE!!

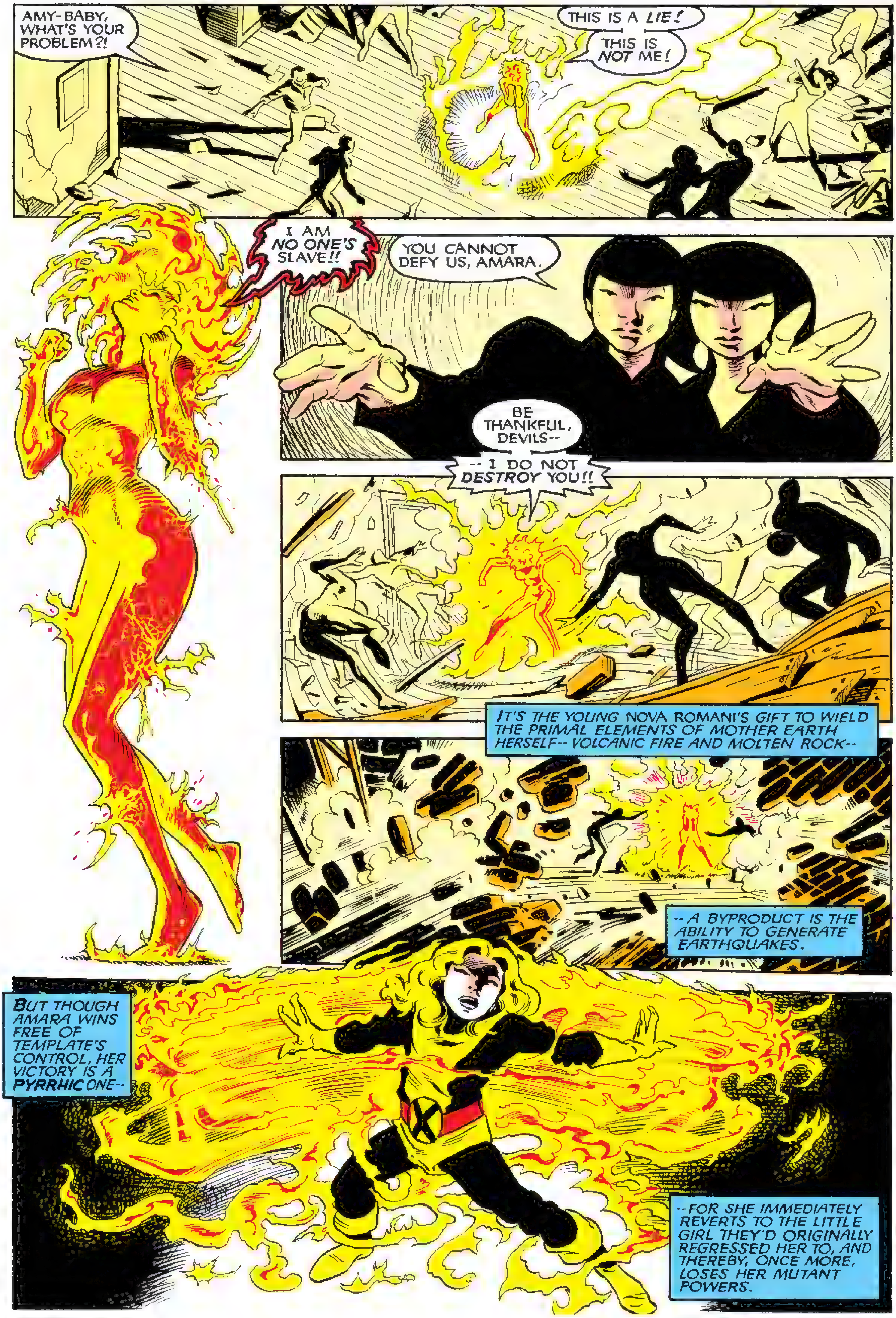

WE ARE *TEMPLATE*.
YOU SHALL DO AS WE SAY...
...LIKE THE GOOD LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS YOU ARE.
YES, SIR.
YES, MA'AM.
WE DIDN'T MEAN...
WE'RE SORRY.
*ALARM!*
*DANGER!*
DON'T TALK STUPID, WARLOCK. WE HAVE TO OBEY OUR *PARENTS*.
NO!
IGNORE THEM, CHILDREN.
THEY WILL BE DEALT WITH LATER.
RECESS IS OVER. INSIDE, NOW, THE LOT OF YOU.
CLASS IS ABOUT TO BEGIN.
THIS IS-- *WRONG!* WE ARE *NOT* YOUR STUDENTS!! AND *YOU* ARE NOT OUR PARENTS!!!
YOU ARE A VERY NAUGHTY GIRL, AMARA.
AND SINCE YOU INSIST ON BEHAVING LIKE A CHILD...
...THEN A *CHILD* IS WHAT YOU SHALL BECOME.
YOU WILL REMAIN REGRESSED AT THIS AGE--
--WELL BEFORE YOUR MUTANT POWERS MANIFESTED THEMSELVES-- UNTIL YOU LEARN YOUR LESSON. AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.


WARLOCK --WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?!!*
FLEE LIFE-END DISCORPORATION FEAR SIRE-DAM HUNT SLAY PROGENY!
CRIPES-- I FORGOT!
ON WARLOCK'S WORLD, CHILDREN PROVE THEIR RIGHT TO EXIST BY KILLING THEIR PARENTS-- GROSS-- OR THE PARENTS KILL THEM!
NO WONDER HE'S--
NEWPLACE NEWHOME HIDE MATRIX DECOHESION
--FREAKED?!?!
HE'S SHREDDING AT THE SEAMS--
--HE *DROPPED* ME!
MOM! DAD!
I LOVE YOU!
*SELFSOULFRIENDCYPHERDOUG!*
YWYOW!
HOLY--?!
GEEZ!
SORRYSADSORRYGLADSORRY QUERY SAFE YOU ARE???
I'M FINE, PAL-- NOW--
-- BUT I'LL BET THOSE BUMS'LL NEVER BE THE SAME.
SHAME SAD COWARD AM!
I KNOW THE FEELING, 'LOCK. I'M AFRAID, TOO, WHENEVER WE GO ON A CAPER. HECK-- WHENEVER WE'RE IN THE *DANGER ROOM!*
BEING SCARED IS OKAY. GIVING IN ISN'T.
THAT'S WHY WE HAVE TO GO BACK-- TO HELP OUR FRIENDS.
CAN YOU SHIELD US FROM DETECTION?
AFFIRMATIVE
CHEER UP, BUCKO! WITH YOUR BRAINS AND MY BRAWN, WE'RE A MATCH FOR ANY CREEPO!
?
CONFUSION. QUERY: IS SELFRIEND MAKING HUMOR?
TRYING.
CAN YOU FIND THE OTHERS WITH A *SPYEYE?*
AFFIRMATIVE.

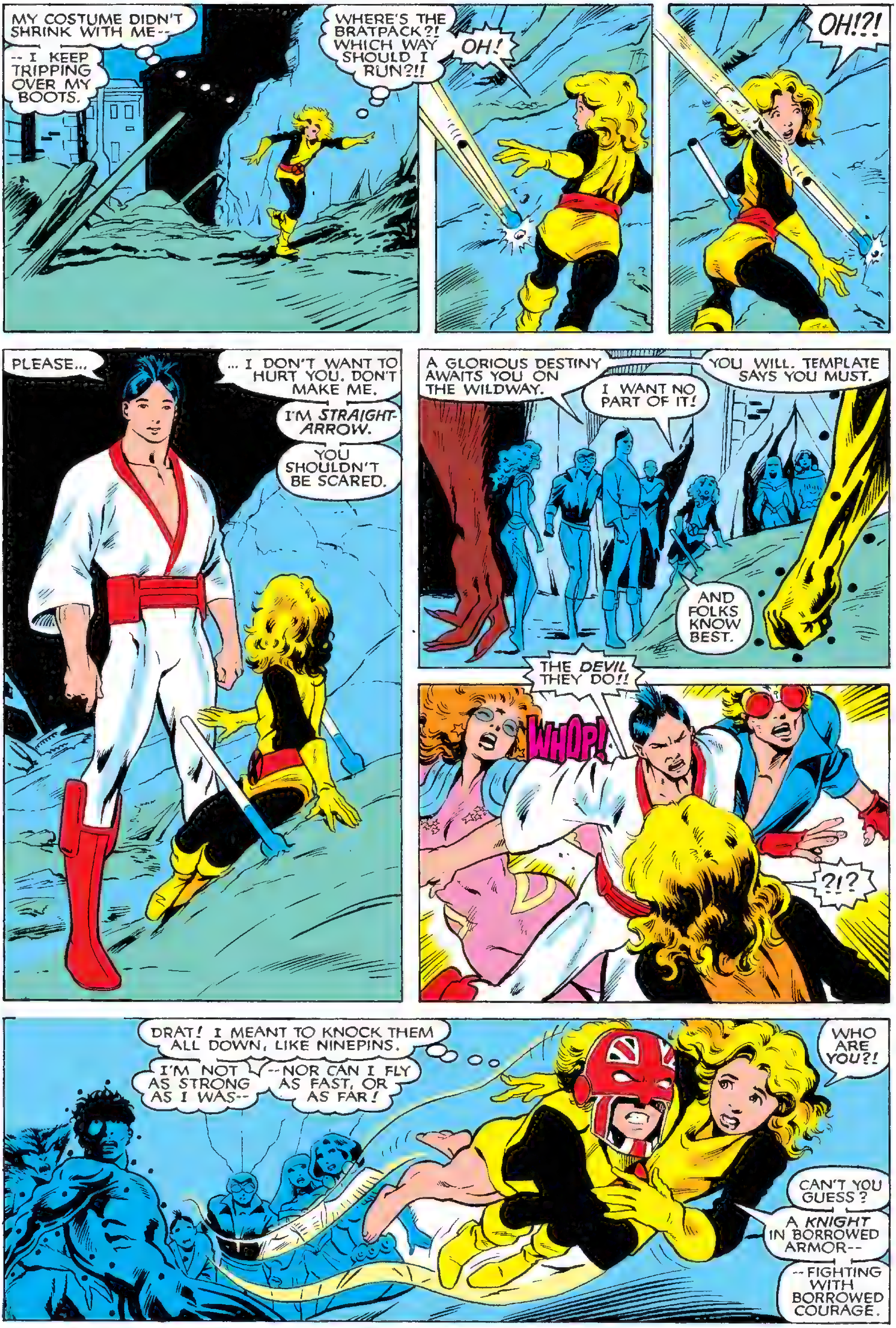

THERE THEY ARE--
--IN A CLASSROOM!
"THEY MUST BE UNDER TEMPLATE'S CONTROL-- WARLOCK, LOOK! WHAT THE HECK HAVE THEY DONE TO AMARA?!"
CHILDREN, YOU ARE ABOUT TO EMBARK ON THE GREATEST ADVENTURE YOU HAVE EVER KNOWN--
--IS THAT NOT WONDERFUL?
Oh, PLEASE!
Oh, YES!
WE CAN'T WAIT!
CHILDREN YOU ARE-- DUTIFUL AND OBEDIENT BUT NOT YET FULLY FORMED, YOUR POWER FAR FROM REALIZED.
THAT IS OUR POWER--TO SHAPE THE SOFT AND MALLEABLE CLAY OF YOUR FLESH AND SPIRIT AS WE DEEM FIT, AND IN OUR *MASTER'S* IMAGE.
WE ARE THE GUIDE, THE PATTERN, THE *TEMPLATE*...
...WHO SHALL TRANSFORM YOU INTO *ADULTS*...
...*PERFECT* IN FORM AND FEATURE...
...FIT-- AND *EAGER*-- TO JOIN THE *BRATPACK* ON *MOJO'S WILDWAY!*

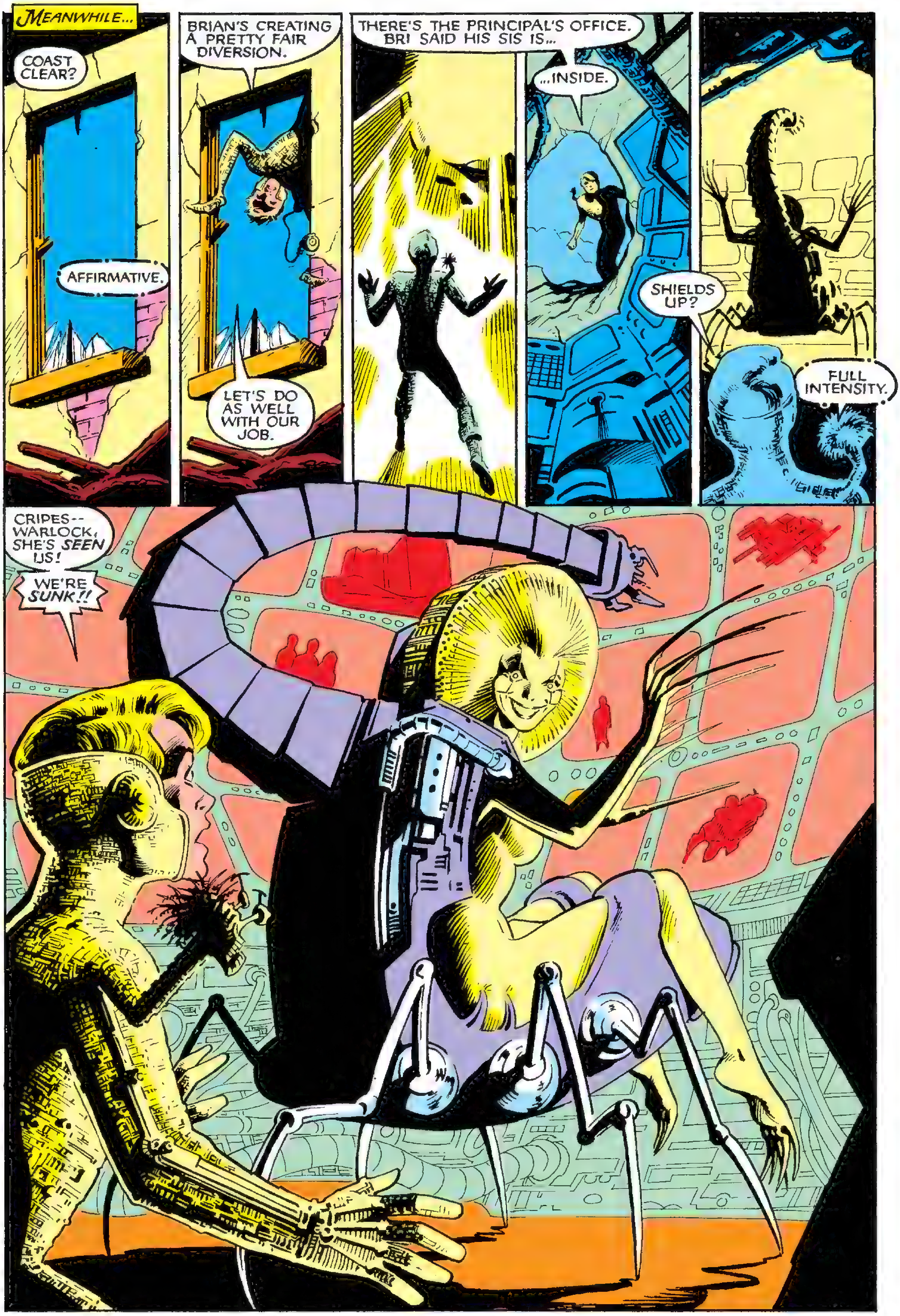

HOLEEE-- !?!
THEY'RE SO-- BEAUTIFUL! LIKE MICHELANGELO STATUES COME TO LIFE. BUT, STILL...
WE SCREW UP, 'LOCK-- THEY GET AHOLD OF US-- WE'LL END UP THE SAME WAY.
THIS IS WAY OUT OF OUR LEAGUE, PARTNER. WE NEED OUR SENIOR TEAM, THE X-MEN!
WARNING! INTRUDER CONTACT!
SAY WHAT--?!
SCANNERS REGISTER YOUTHFUL MALE PARAHUMAN ATOP NEIGHBORING STRUCTURE, IMBUED WITH CONSIDERABLE PHYSICAL POWER-- NEAR STELLAR LIFEGLOW-- AND EXTRUDING MOISTURE FROM OCULAR SENSORS...
HE'S CRYING?
DEDUCTION CONFIRMED.
MEMORY CORES INDICATE THIS PHENOMENON IS INDICATIVE OF SEVERE PHYSIOLOGICAL OR EMOTIONAL DISTRESS.
CONTACT ESTABLISHED.
HE'S A KID, YOUNGER'N ME!
SCARED STIFF, TOO-- HE'S CLUTCHING THAT HELMET LIKE HIS LIFE DEPENDED ON IT.
NO SIGNS OF CUTS OR BRUISES, I DON'T THINK HE'S HURT.
HIYA, FELLA. I'M...
GET AWAY!
THWAM!
LEAVE ME ALONE!!
'LOCK-- STOP HIM! BRING HIM BACK!
SELFRIEND INJURED!
PUNK PACKS A WICKED PUNCH...
...BUT I'LL SURVIVE.
I HOPE.

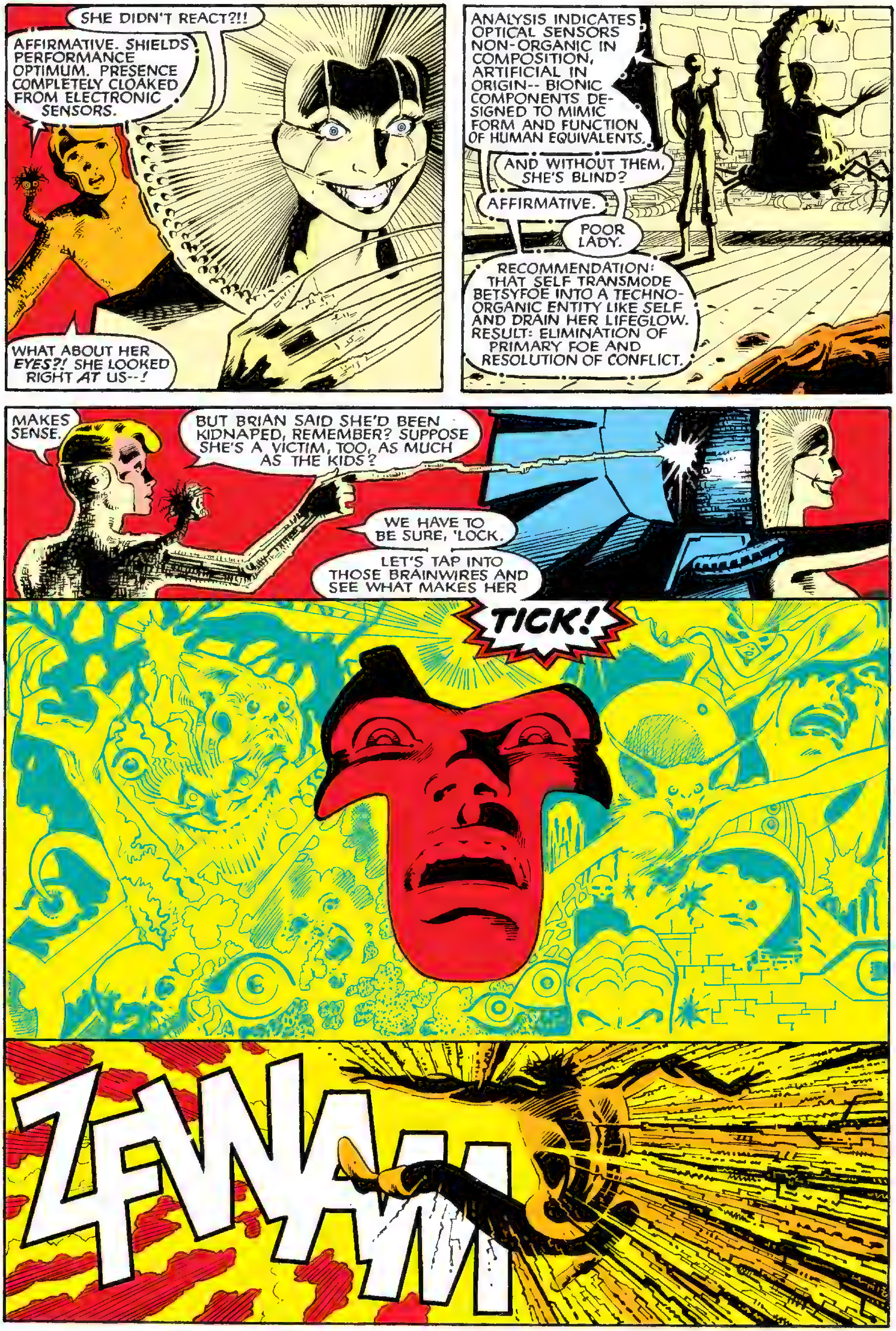

LATER...
MEDISCAN PERCEIVES MAJOR SUBCUTANEOUS TRAUMA...
I CAN SEE AND FEEL THAT FOR MYSELF, 'LOCK-- A HECKUVA BRUISE.
I'M LUCKY YOU DIDN'T BREAK SOME BONES, FELLA.
I'M SORRY. I WAS FRIGHTENED.
WELCOME TO THE CLUB.
MAN O MAN, THIS *HURTS!* EVERY BREATH-- EVERY *HEART-BEAT*-- FEELS LIKE I'M BEING POKED WITH A KNIFE.
GOT A NAME?
BRIAN...
...I'M *BRIAN BRADDOCK.*
I USED TO BE BIGGER-- LOTS BIGGER'N YOU-- BUT THEN MUMMY AND DADDY YELLED AT ME. THEY SAID I WAS A NAUGHTY BOY-- BUT I'M NOT! *I'M NOT!*
THEY PUNISHED ME ANYWAY. THEY MADE ME LITTLE.
SO I RAN AWAY.
SO HE WAS AN ADULT THEN-- AND JUDGING FROM HIS ABILITIES AND THAT HELMET-- HE WAS A *SUPER-BEING,* TOO.
HE ISN'T A MUTANT, THOUGH-- OTHERWISE, HE'D HAVE LOST HIS POWERS WHEN HE PASSED BACK THROUGH PUBERTY. SOUNDS ENGLISH. WHAT BROUGHT HIM TO NEW YORK-- AND INTO THIS MESS?
DON'T WORRY, BRIAN, EVERYTHING'LL BE FINE ONCE WE CONTACT THE X-MEN...
NO! THERE ISN'T TIME! THE WILDWAY IS IN ANOTHER DIMENSION, AND THE BRATPACK IS GOING THERE *TONIGHT!* IF YOU DON'T ACT NOW...
...IT'LL BE TOO LATE! WE'LL NEVER SEE THEM AGAIN!
WHAT THE HECK MAKES YOU THINK *I* CAN DO ANY GOOD?
WHAT THE HECK MAKES ME THINK I HAVE ANY CHOICE?!
PARDON ME FOR ASKING, FELLA-- BUT YOU SEEM TO KNOW AN AWFUL LOT ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON.
YOU HOLDING OUT? THERE SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T TOLD US?!
YES.
THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE --IT'S MY SISTER, *BETSY.*
I CAME HERE TO RESCUE HER, TO SAVE HER FROM THE AWFUL VILLAINS WHO'D ABDUCTED HER MONTHS AGO-- ONLY TO DISCOVER SHE'D BECOME ONE OF THEM!
SELFRIENDCYPHER!
COMMOTION BELOW!
IT'S *MAGMA!*

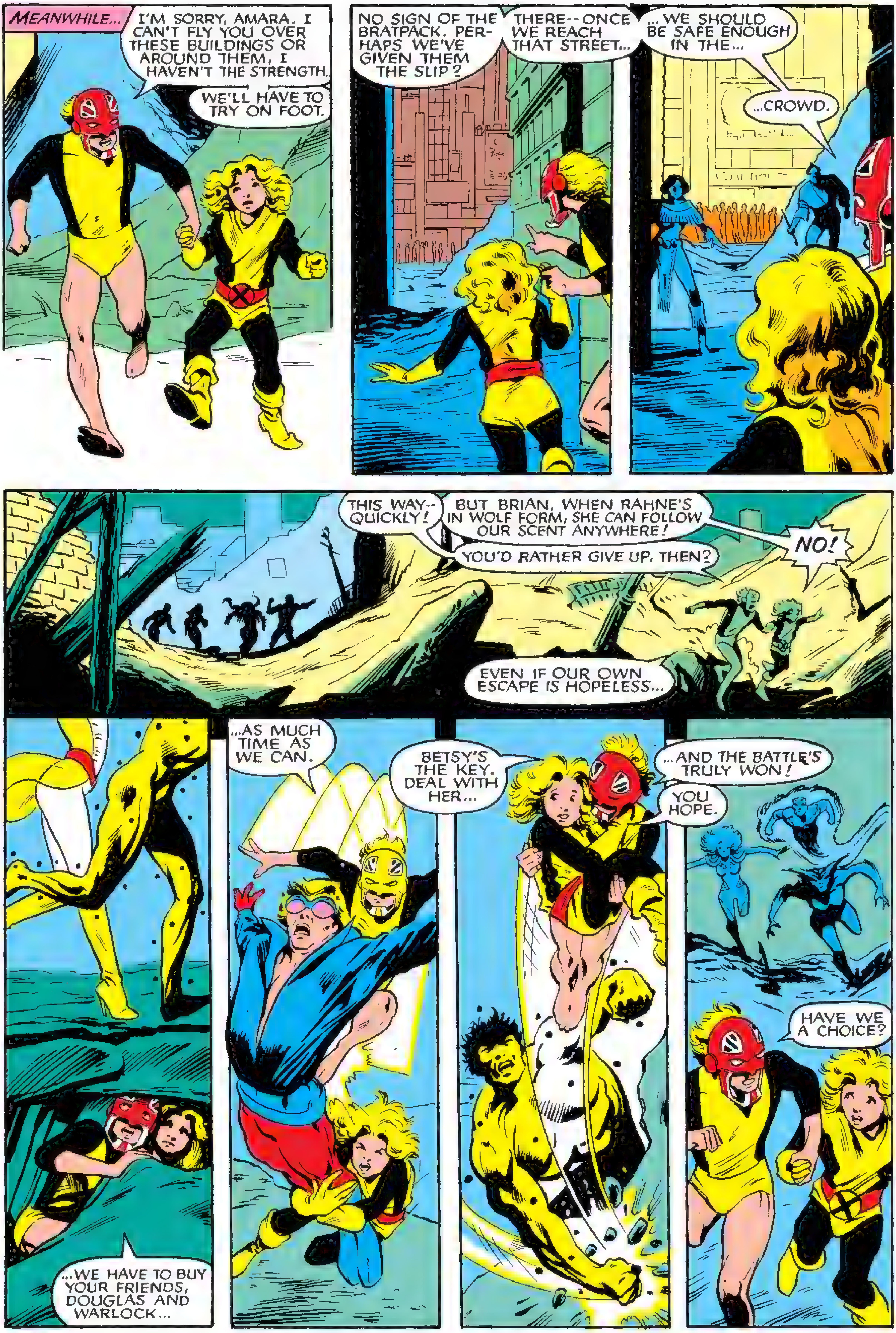

AMY-BABY, WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?!
THIS IS A *LIE!*
THIS IS *NOT* ME!
I AM *NO ONE'S* SLAVE!!
YOU CANNOT DEFY US, AMARA.
BE THANKFUL, DEVILS--
-- I DO NOT *DESTROY* YOU!!
IT'S THE YOUNG NOVA ROMANI'S GIFT TO WIELD THE PRIMAL ELEMENTS OF MOTHER EARTH HERSELF-- VOLCANIC FIRE AND MOLTEN ROCK--
--A BYPRODUCT IS THE ABILITY TO GENERATE EARTHQUAKES.
BUT THOUGH AMARA WINS FREE OF TEMPLATE'S CONTROL, HER VICTORY IS A **PYRRHIC** ONE--
--FOR SHE IMMEDIATELY REVERTS TO THE LITTLE GIRL THEY'D ORIGINALLY REGRESSED HER TO, AND THEREBY, ONCE MORE, LOSES HER MUTANT POWERS.

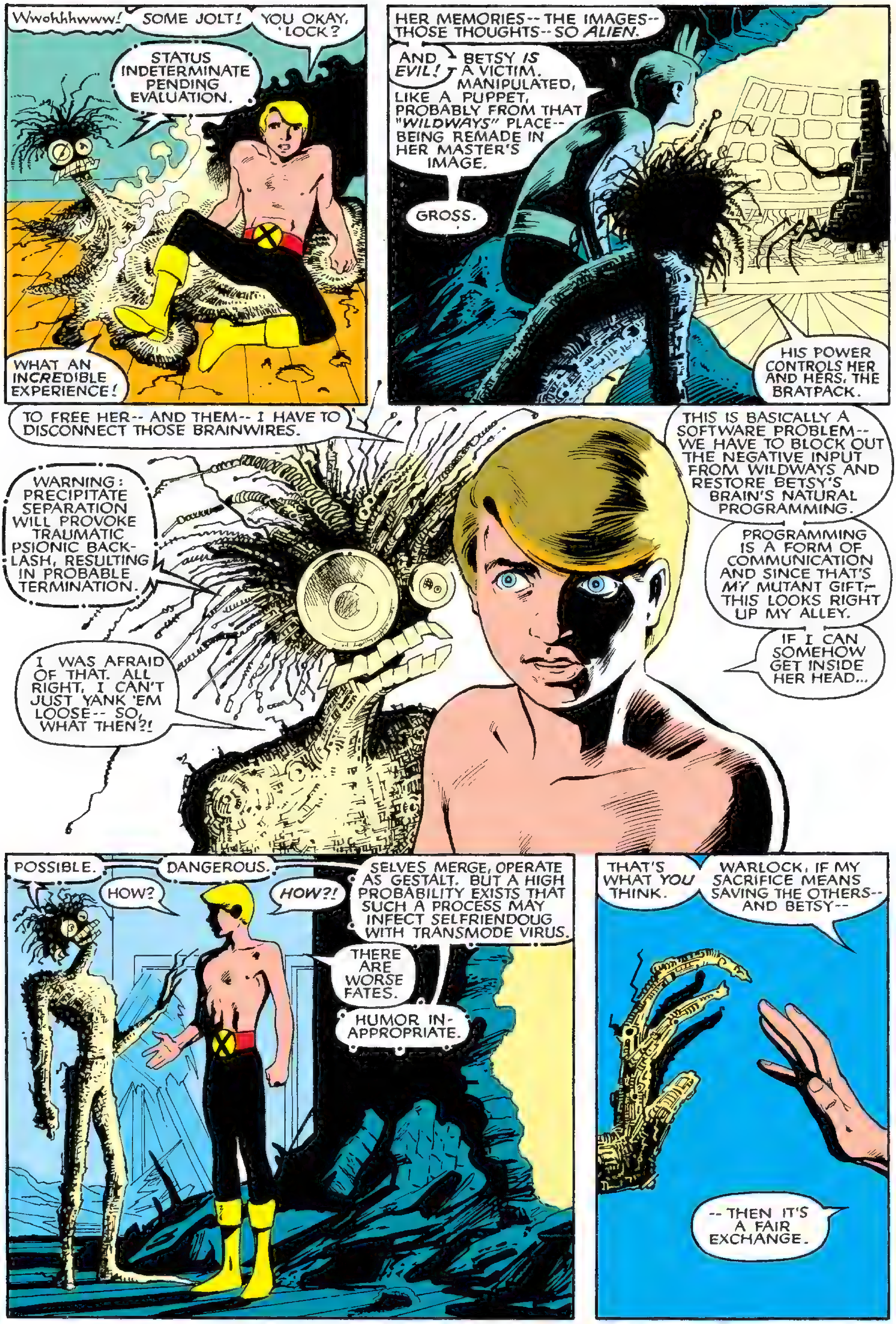
ILLYANA, MIRAGE-- ALL OF YOU--LOOK AT ME, LISTEN TO ME!
REACH INTO YOUR SOULS-- REMEMBER WHO YOU WERE-- IF YOU FIGHT, YOU CAN BE FREE--
--DON'T LET THESE MONSTERS MAKE YOU SLAVES!
BUT, MAGMA--
--IT'S WHAT WE WANT.
NOT I. I'D RATHER DIE!
THAT MAY YET BE ARRANGED.
IN THE MEAN-WHILE...
...BRATPACK, FOLLOW HER!
BRING HER BACK--
--AND QUICKLY!
TIME GROWS SHORT!
SHE HASN'T A PRAYER...
...UNLESS SHE GETS SOME HELP!
YOU'RE ELECTED, BRIAN.
YOU LOOK AFTER AMY, WHILE 'LOCK AND I TACKLE YOUR SISTER.
BUT-- SUPPOSE I FAIL AGAIN? THEY'LL CATCH ME--?!
WHAT, YOU CAN'T BE BRAVE-- YOU CAN'T BE A HERO-- 'CAUSE YOU'RE A KID?! BULL! YOU HEARD AMARA-- REMEMBER WHO YOU WERE! IF YOU ABANDON HER, YOU WON'T NEED TEMPLATE TO MAKE YOU PART OF THE BRATPACK--BECAUSE WHERE IT COUNTS, YOU'RE ALREADY ONE OF THEM!
YOUR CHOICE, PAL--
--WHICH'LL IT BE?!

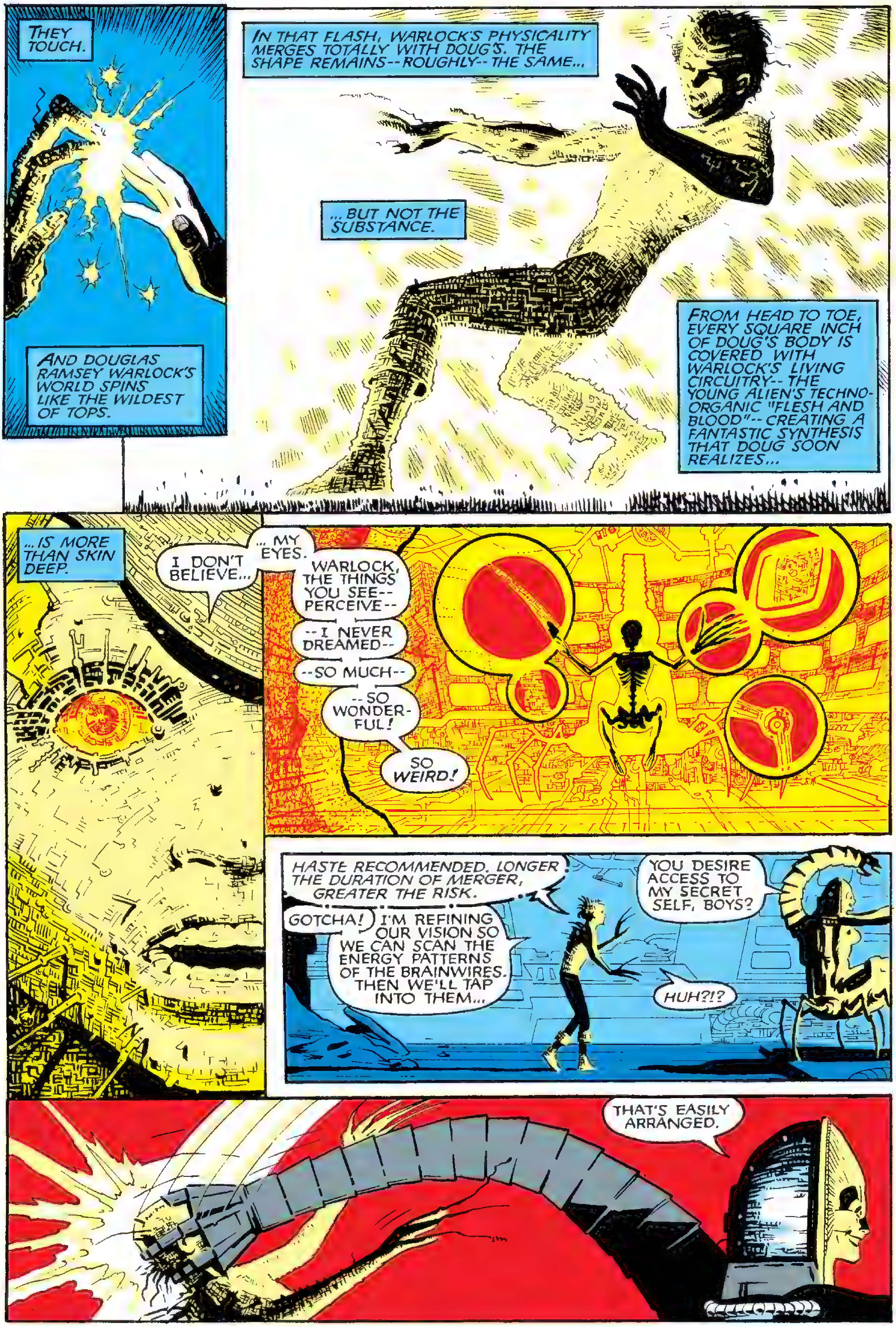

MY COSTUME DIDN'T SHRINK WITH ME--
-- I KEEP TRIPPING OVER MY BOOTS.
WHERE'S THE BRATPACK?! WHICH WAY SHOULD I RUN?!!
OH!
OH!?!
PLEASE...
... I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU. DON'T MAKE ME.
I'M *STRAIGHT-ARROW.*
YOU SHOULDN'T BE SCARED.
A GLORIOUS DESTINY AWAITS YOU ON THE WILDWAY.
I WANT NO PART OF IT!
YOU WILL. TEMPLATE SAYS YOU MUST.
AND FOLKS KNOW BEST.
THE *DEVIL* THEY DO!!
WHOP!
?!?
DRAT! I MEANT TO KNOCK THEM ALL DOWN, LIKE NINEPINS.
I'M NOT AS STRONG AS I WAS--
--NOR CAN I FLY AS FAST, OR AS FAR!
WHO ARE *YOU?!*
CAN'T YOU GUESS?
A *KNIGHT* IN BORROWED ARMOR--
-- FIGHTING WITH BORROWED COURAGE.

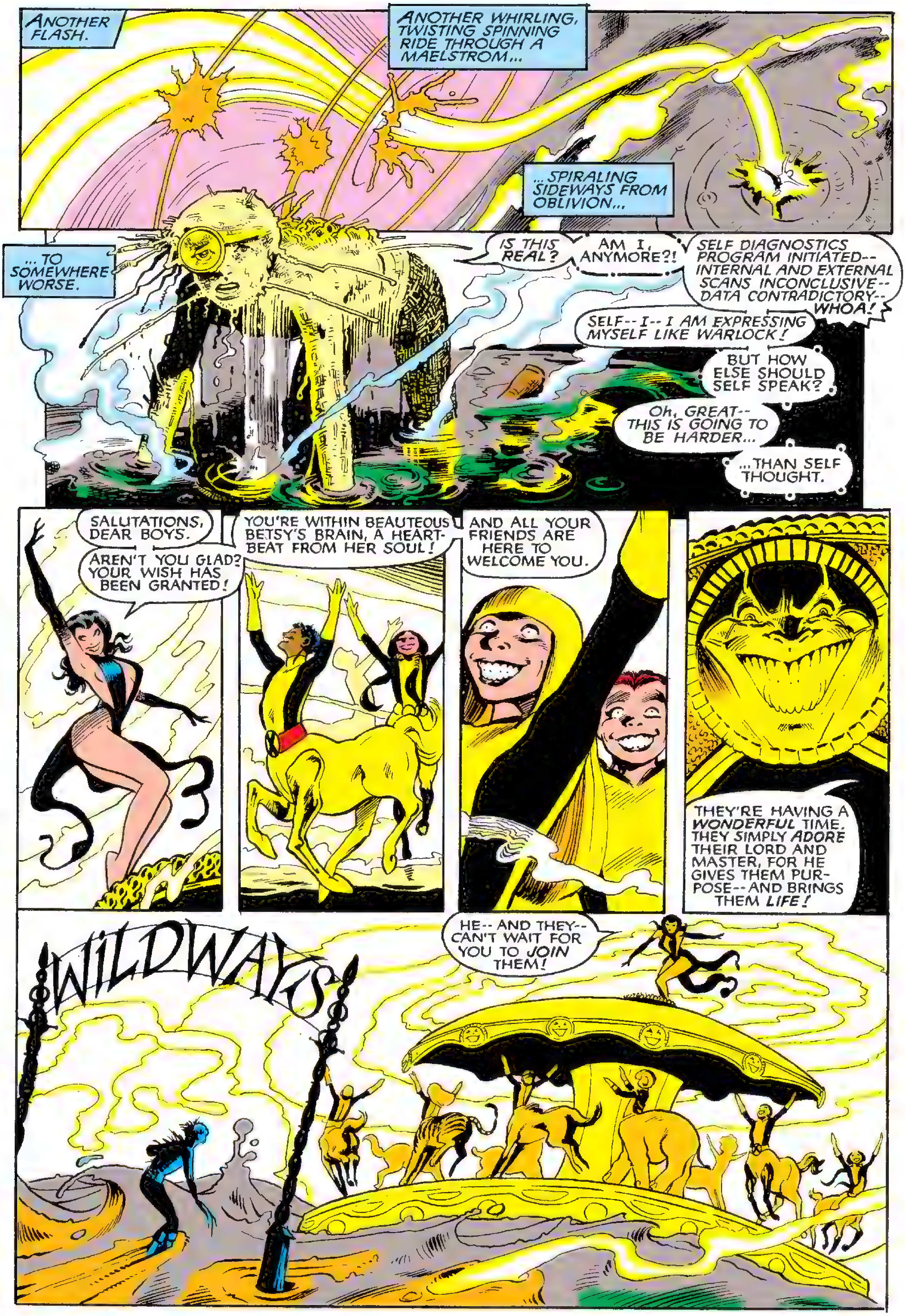

MEANWHILE...
COAST CLEAR?
AFFIRMATIVE.
BRIAN'S CREATING A PRETTY FAIR DIVERSION.
LET'S DO AS WELL WITH OUR JOB.
THERE'S THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. BRI SAID HIS SIS IS...
...INSIDE.
SHIELDS UP?
FULL INTENSITY.
CRIPES-- WARLOCK, SHE'S SEEN US!
WE'RE SUNK!!

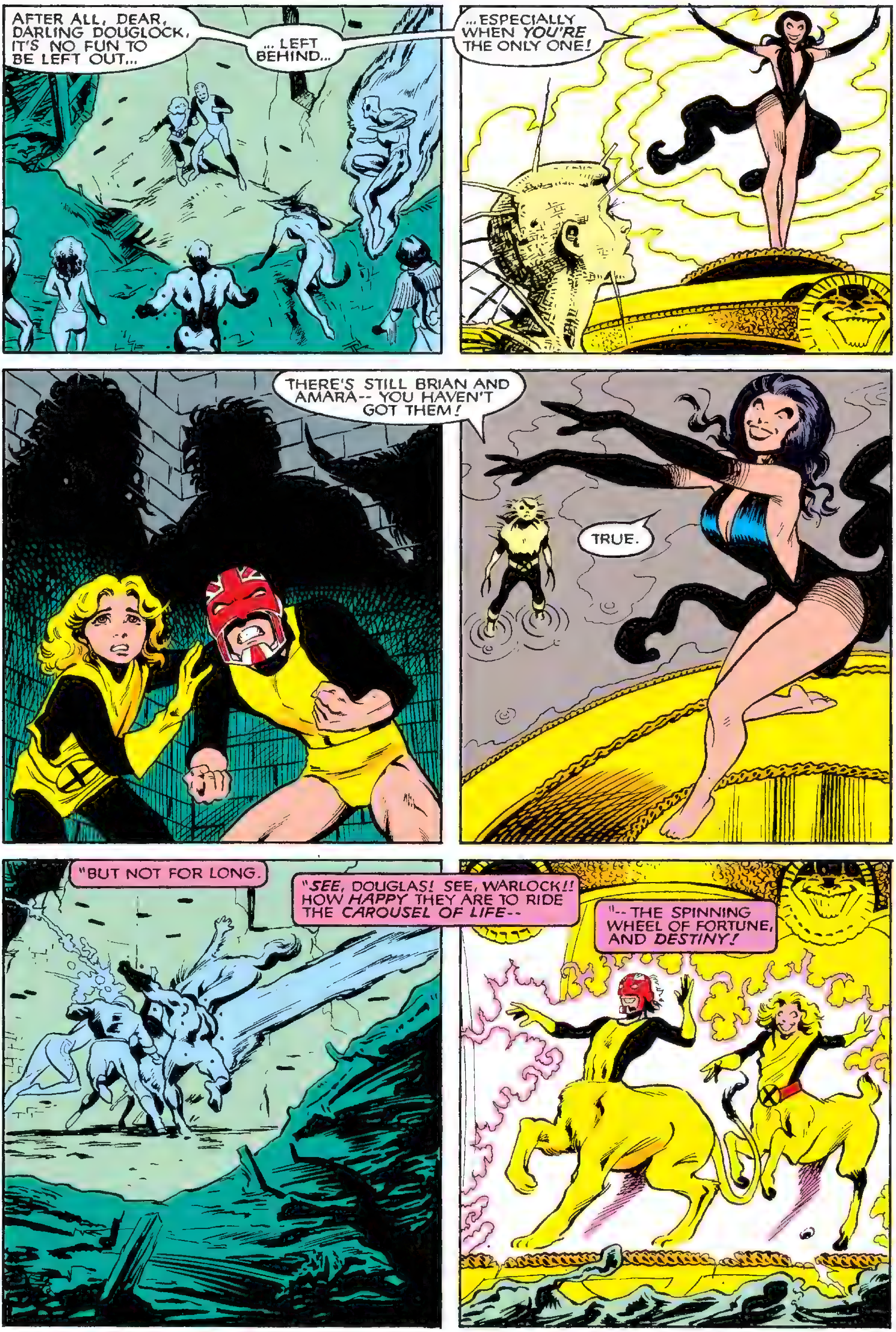

SHE DIDN'T REACT?!!
AFFIRMATIVE. SHIELDS PERFORMANCE OPTIMUM. PRESENCE COMPLETELY CLOAKED FROM ELECTRONIC SENSORS.
WHAT ABOUT HER *EYES?!* SHE LOOKED RIGHT *AT* US--!
ANALYSIS INDICATES OPTICAL SENSORS NON-ORGANIC IN COMPOSITION, ARTIFICIAL IN ORIGIN-- BIONIC COMPONENTS DESIGNED TO MIMIC FORM AND FUNCTION OF HUMAN EQUIVALENTS.
AND WITHOUT THEM, SHE'S BLIND?
AFFIRMATIVE.
POOR LADY.
RECOMMENDATION: THAT SELF TRANSMODE BETSYFOE INTO A TECHNO-ORGANIC ENTITY LIKE SELF AND DRAIN HER LIFEGLOW. RESULT: ELIMINATION OF PRIMARY FOE AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT.
MAKES SENSE.
BUT BRIAN SAID SHE'D BEEN KIDNAPED, REMEMBER? SUPPOSE SHE'S A VICTIM, TOO, AS MUCH AS THE KIDS?
WE HAVE TO BE SURE, 'LOCK.
LET'S TAP INTO THOSE BRAINWIRES AND SEE WHAT MAKES HER
TICK!
ZFWAM

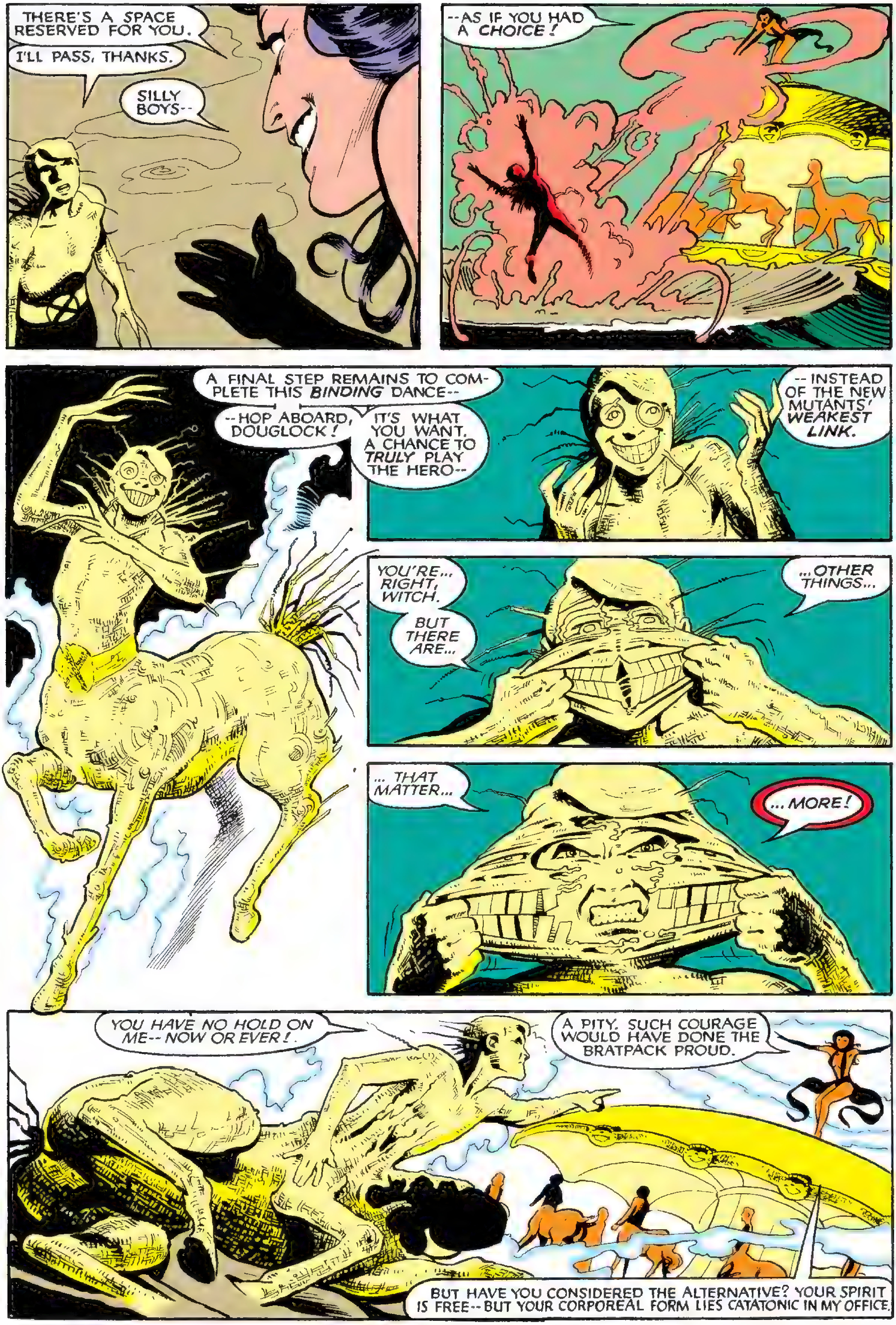

MEANWHILE...
I'M SORRY, AMARA. I CAN'T FLY YOU OVER THESE BUILDINGS OR AROUND THEM. I HAVEN'T THE STRENGTH.
WE'LL HAVE TO TRY ON FOOT.
NO SIGN OF THE BRATPACK. PERHAPS WE'VE GIVEN THEM THE SLIP?
THERE--ONCE WE REACH THAT STREET...
...WE SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH IN THE...
...CROWD.
THIS WAY--QUICKLY!
BUT BRIAN, WHEN RAHNE'S IN WOLF FORM, SHE CAN FOLLOW OUR SCENT ANYWHERE!
YOU'D RATHER GIVE UP, THEN?
NO!
EVEN IF OUR OWN ESCAPE IS HOPELESS...
...WE HAVE TO BUY YOUR FRIENDS, DOUGLAS AND WARLOCK...
...AS MUCH TIME AS WE CAN.
BETSY'S THE KEY. DEAL WITH HER...
...AND THE BATTLE'S TRULY WON!
YOU HOPE.
HAVE WE A CHOICE?

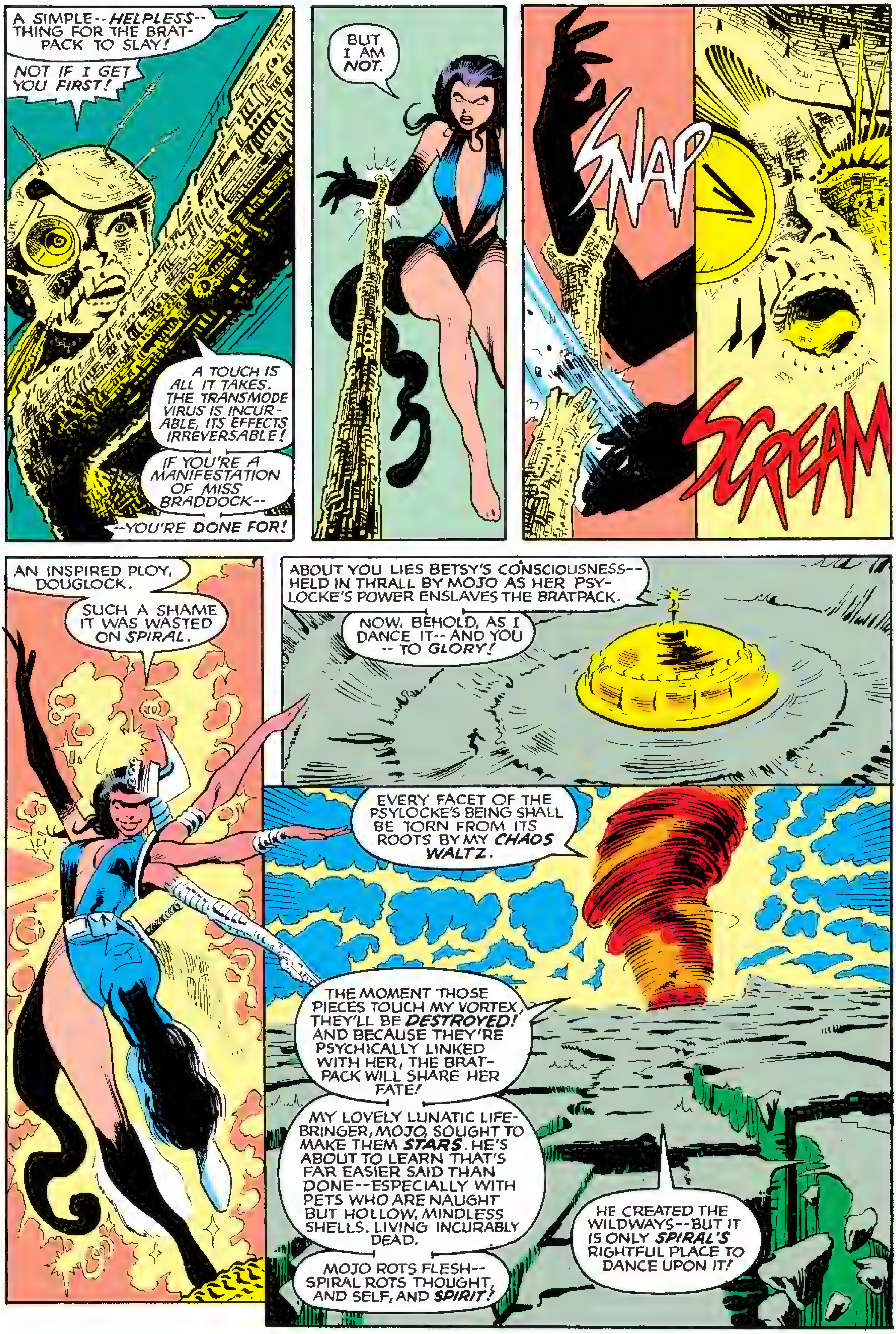

Wwohhhwww!
SOME JOLT!
YOU OKAY, 'LOCK?
STATUS INDETERMINATE PENDING EVALUATION.
WHAT AN *INCREDIBLE* EXPERIENCE!
HER MEMORIES-- THE IMAGES-- THOSE THOUGHTS-- SO *ALIEN*.
AND *EVIL!*
BETSY *IS* A VICTIM. MANIPULATED, LIKE A PUPPET, PROBABLY FROM THAT "*WILDWAYS*" PLACE-- BEING REMADE IN HER MASTER'S IMAGE.
GROSS.
HIS POWER CONTROLS HER AND HERS, THE BRATPACK.
TO FREE HER-- AND THEM-- I HAVE TO DISCONNECT THOSE BRAINWIRES.
WARNING: PRECIPITATE SEPARATION WILL PROVOKE TRAUMATIC PSIONIC BACKLASH, RESULTING IN PROBABLE TERMINATION.
I WAS AFRAID OF THAT. ALL RIGHT, I CAN'T JUST YANK 'EM LOOSE-- SO, WHAT THEN?!
THIS IS BASICALLY A SOFTWARE PROBLEM-- WE HAVE TO BLOCK OUT THE NEGATIVE INPUT FROM WILDWAYS AND RESTORE BETSY'S BRAIN'S NATURAL PROGRAMMING.
PROGRAMMING IS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION AND SINCE THAT'S *MY* MUTANT GIFT-- THIS LOOKS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY.
IF I CAN SOMEHOW GET INSIDE HER HEAD...
POSSIBLE.
HOW?
DANGEROUS.
*HOW?!*
SELVES MERGE, OPERATE AS GESTALT. BUT A HIGH PROBABILITY EXISTS THAT SUCH A PROCESS MAY INFECT SELFRIENDDOUG WITH TRANSMODE VIRUS.
THERE ARE WORSE FATES.
HUMOR INAPPROPRIATE.
THAT'S WHAT *YOU* THINK.
WARLOCK, IF MY SACRIFICE MEANS SAVING THE OTHERS-- AND BETSY--
-- THEN IT'S A FAIR EXCHANGE.

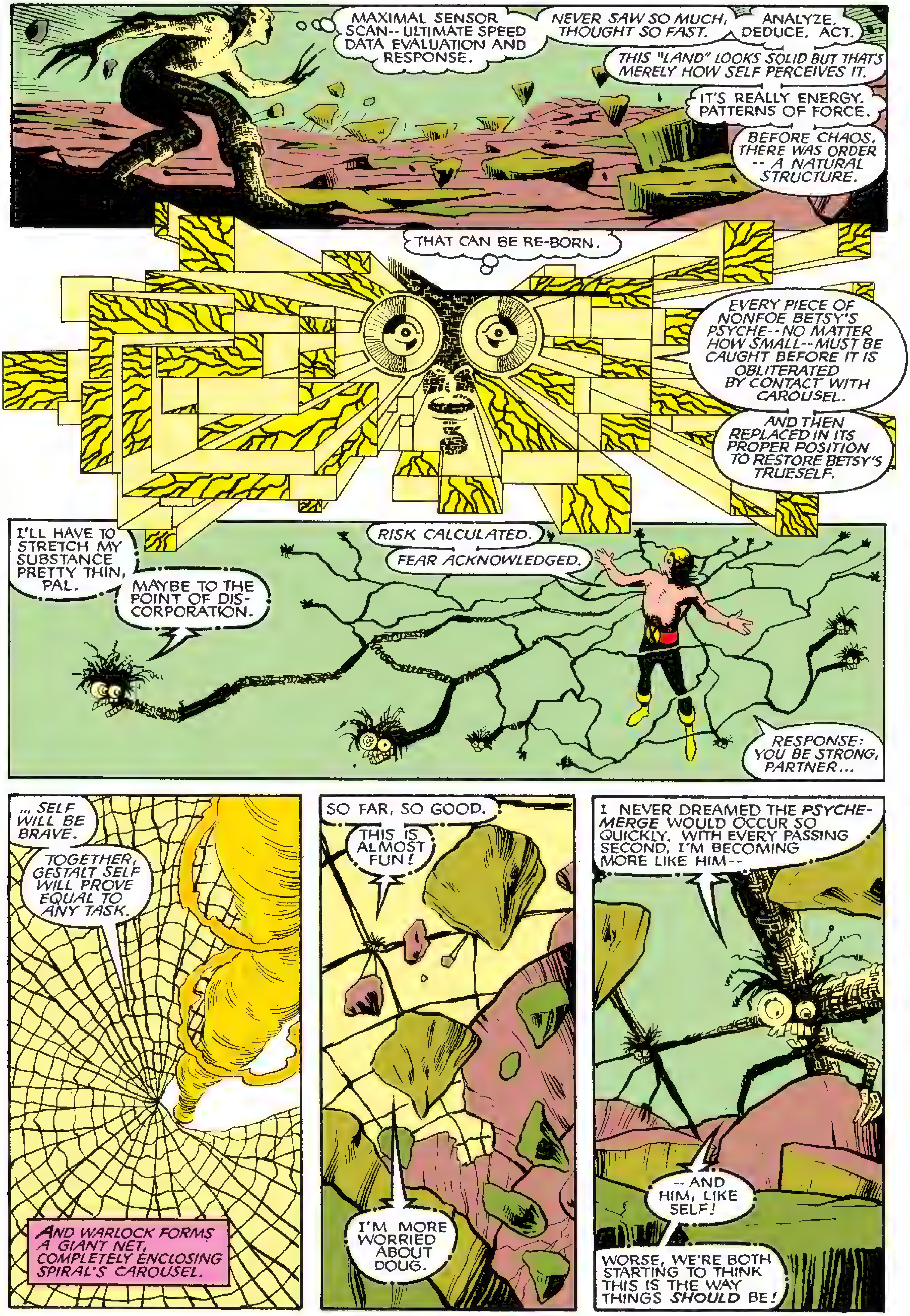

THEY TOUCH.
AND DOUGLAS RAMSEY WARLOCK'S WORLD SPINS LIKE THE WILDEST OF TOPS.
IN THAT FLASH, WARLOCK'S PHYSICALITY MERGES TOTALLY WITH DOUG'S. THE SHAPE REMAINS--ROUGHLY--THE SAME...
...BUT NOT THE SUBSTANCE.
FROM HEAD TO TOE, EVERY SQUARE INCH OF DOUG'S BODY IS COVERED WITH WARLOCK'S LIVING CIRCUITRY--THE YOUNG ALIEN'S TECHNO-ORGANIC "FLESH AND BLOOD"--CREATING A FANTASTIC SYNTHESIS THAT DOUG SOON REALIZES...
...IS MORE THAN SKIN DEEP.
I DON'T BELIEVE...
...MY EYES.
WARLOCK, THE THINGS YOU SEE--PERCEIVE--
--I NEVER DREAMED--
--SO MUCH--
--SO WONDERFUL!
SO WEIRD!
HASTE RECOMMENDED. LONGER THE DURATION OF MERGER, GREATER THE RISK.
GOTCHA!
I'M REFINING OUR VISION SO WE CAN SCAN THE ENERGY PATTERNS OF THE BRAINWIRES. THEN WE'LL TAP INTO THEM...
YOU DESIRE ACCESS TO MY SECRET SELF, BOYS?
HUH?!?
THAT'S EASILY ARRANGED.

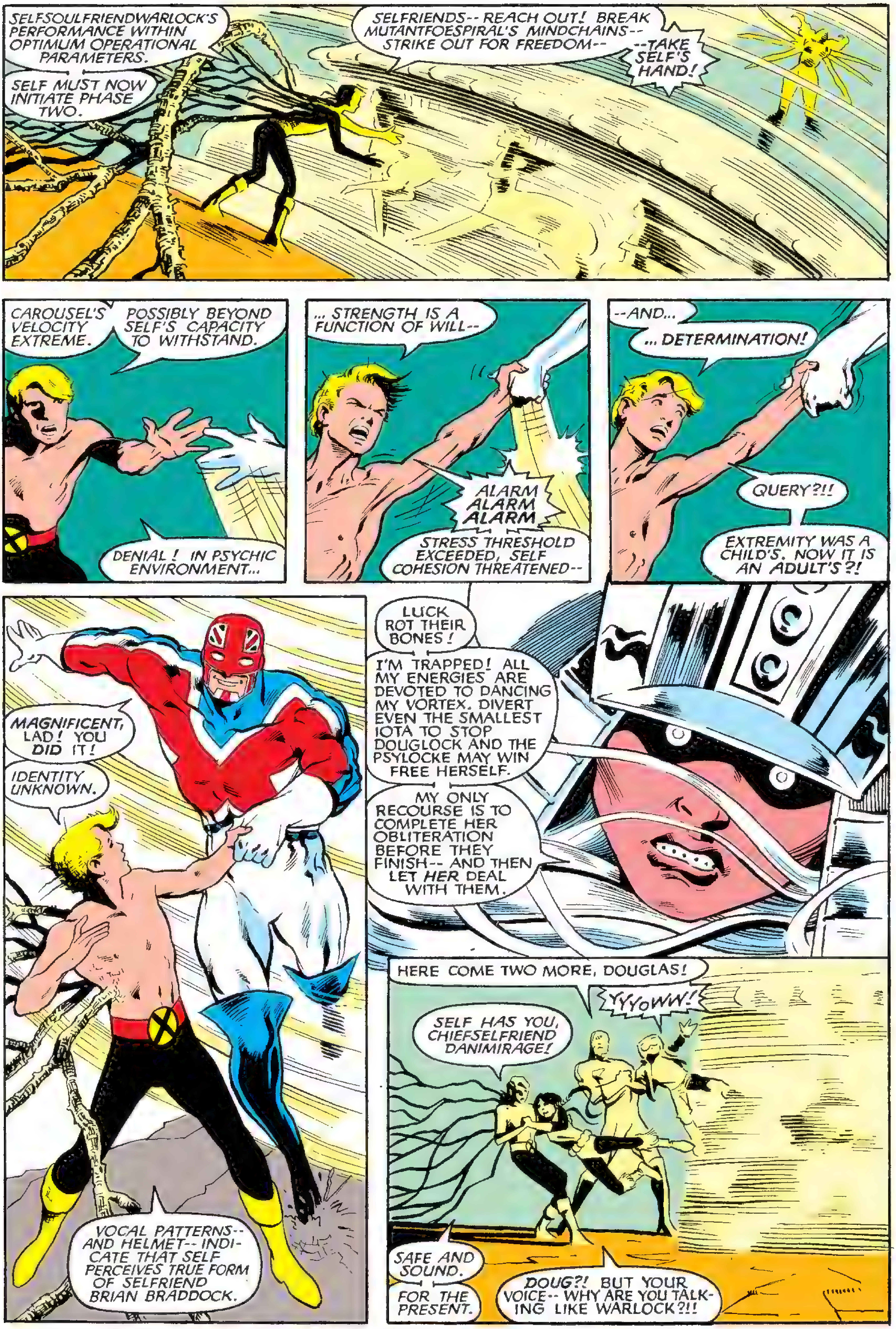

ANOTHER FLASH.
ANOTHER WHIRLING, TWISTING SPINNING RIDE THROUGH A MAELSTROM...
...SPIRALING SIDEWAYS FROM OBLIVION...
...TO SOMEWHERE WORSE.
IS THIS REAL?
AM I, ANYMORE?!
SELF DIAGNOSTICS PROGRAM INITIATED-- INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SCANS INCONCLUSIVE-- DATA CONTRADICTORY-- WHOA!
SELF-- I-- I AM EXPRESSING MYSELF LIKE WARLOCK!
BUT HOW ELSE SHOULD SELF SPEAK?
Oh, GREAT-- THIS IS GOING TO BE HARDER...
...THAN SELF THOUGHT.
SALUTATIONS, DEAR BOYS.
AREN'T YOU GLAD? YOUR WISH HAS BEEN GRANTED!
YOU'RE WITHIN BEAUTEOUS BETSY'S BRAIN, A HEART-BEAT FROM HER SOUL!
AND ALL YOUR FRIENDS ARE HERE TO WELCOME YOU.
THEY'RE HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME. THEY SIMPLY ADORE THEIR LORD AND MASTER, FOR HE GIVES THEM PURPOSE--AND BRINGS THEM LIFE!
WILDWAYS
HE-- AND THEY-- CAN'T WAIT FOR YOU TO JOIN THEM!

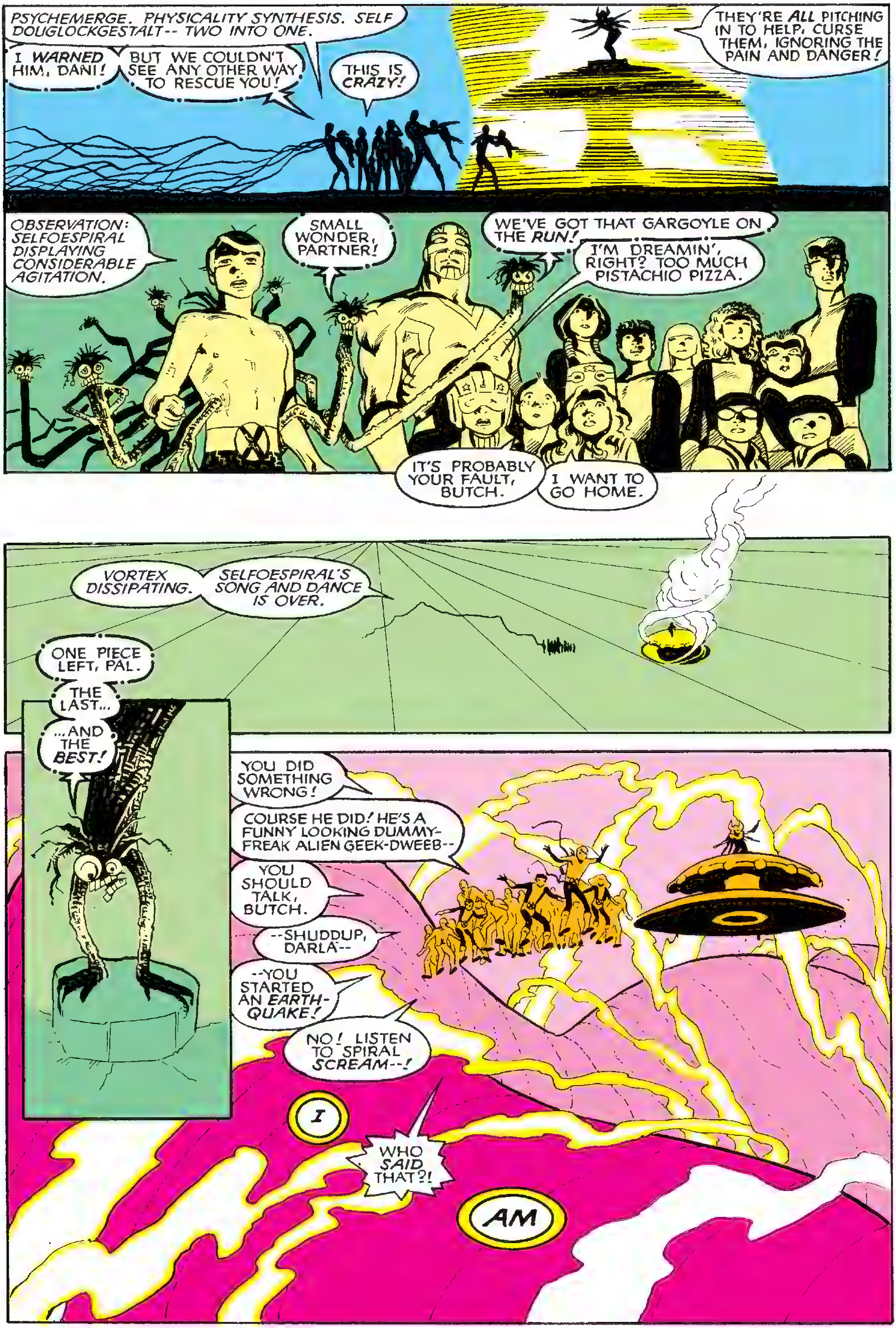

AFTER ALL, DEAR, DARLING DOUGLOCK, IT'S NO FUN TO BE LEFT OUT...
... LEFT BEHIND...
... ESPECIALLY WHEN *YOU'RE* THE ONLY ONE!
THERE'S STILL BRIAN AND AMARA-- YOU HAVEN'T GOT THEM!
TRUE.
"BUT NOT FOR LONG.
"*SEE*, DOUGLAS! SEE, WARLOCK!! HOW *HAPPY* THEY ARE TO RIDE THE *CAROUSEL OF LIFE*--
"-- THE SPINNING WHEEL OF FORTUNE, AND *DESTINY!*

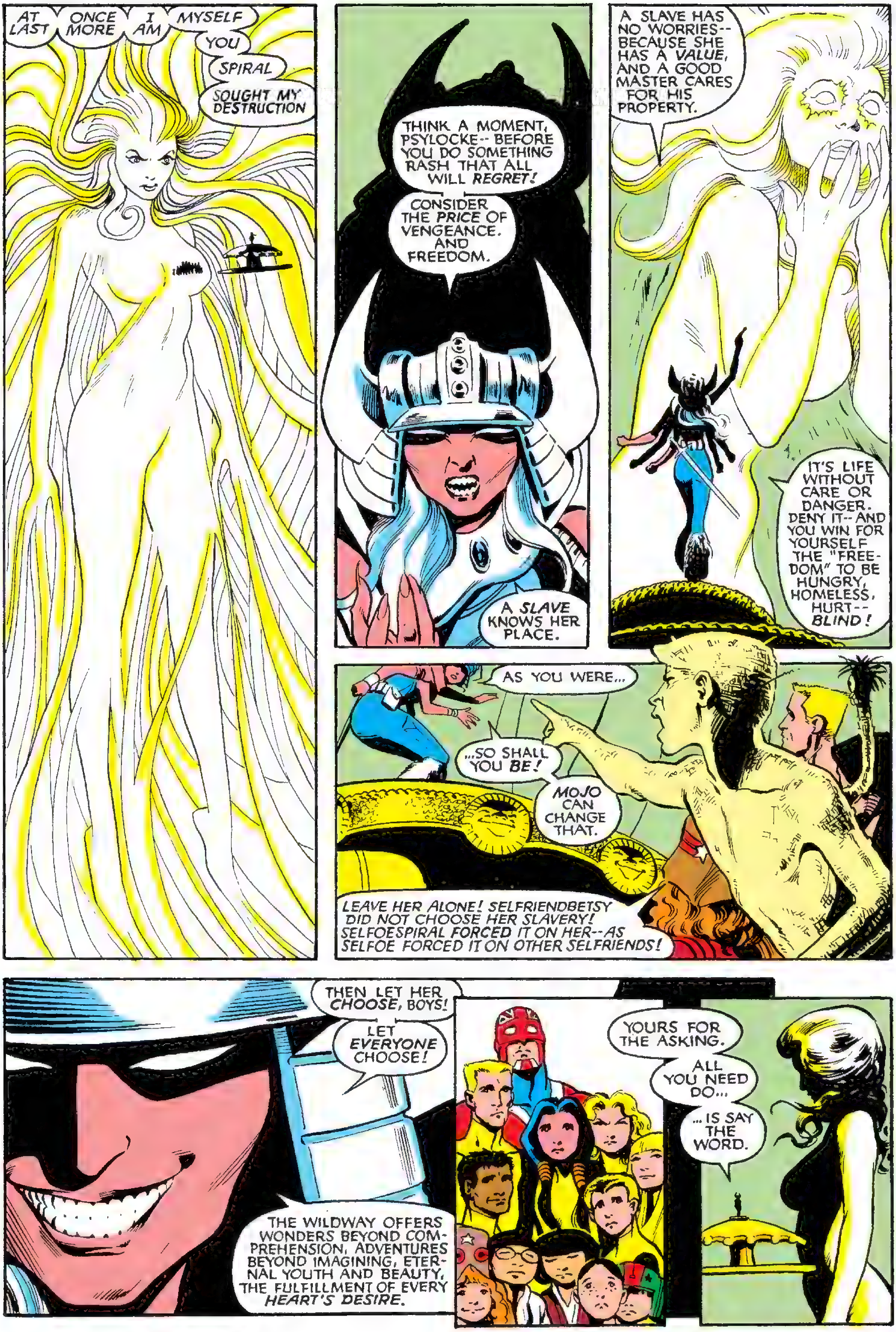

THERE'S A SPACE RESERVED FOR YOU.
I'LL PASS, THANKS.
SILLY BOYS--
--AS IF YOU HAD A *CHOICE!*
A FINAL STEP REMAINS TO COMPLETE THIS *BINDING* DANCE--
--HOP ABOARD, DOUGLOCK!
IT'S WHAT YOU WANT, A CHANCE TO *TRULY* PLAY THE HERO--
--INSTEAD OF THE NEW MUTANTS' *WEAKEST LINK.*
*YOU'RE... RIGHT, WITCH.*
*BUT THERE ARE...*
*...OTHER THINGS...*
*... THAT MATTER...*
*...MORE!*
*YOU HAVE NO HOLD ON ME-- NOW OR EVER!*
A PITY. SUCH COURAGE WOULD HAVE DONE THE BRATPACK PROUD.
BUT HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE ALTERNATIVE? YOUR SPIRIT IS FREE-- BUT YOUR CORPOREAL FORM LIES CATATONIC IN MY OFFICE.

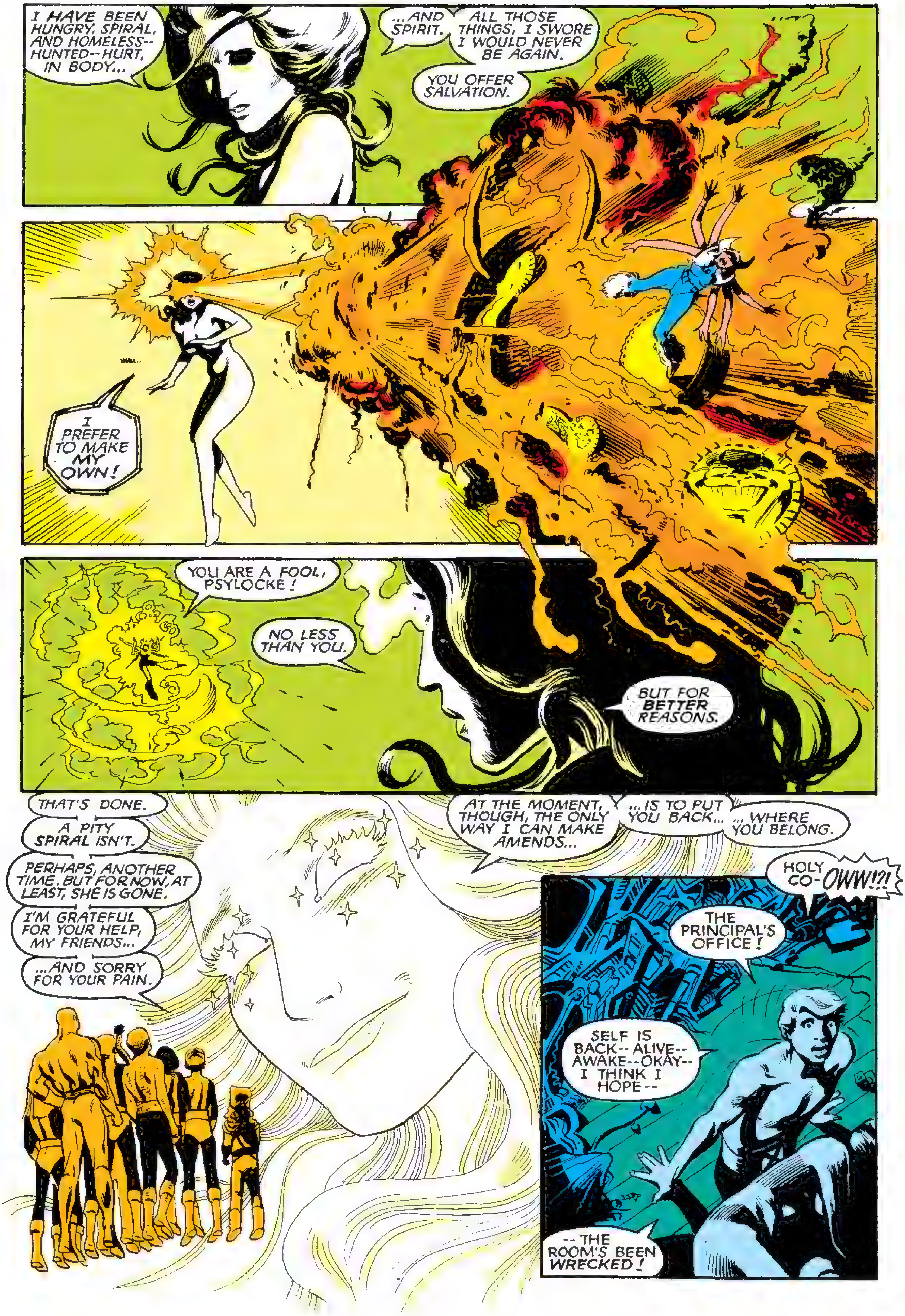

A SIMPLE--*HELPLESS*--THING FOR THE BRAT-PACK TO SLAY!
NOT IF I GET YOU *FIRST!*
A TOUCH IS ALL IT TAKES. THE TRANSMODE VIRUS IS INCURABLE, ITS EFFECTS IRREVERSABLE!
IF YOU'RE A MANIFESTATION OF MISS BRADDOCK--
--YOU'RE *DONE* FOR!
BUT I AM *NOT.*
SNAP
SCREAM
AN INSPIRED PLOY, DOUGLOCK.
SUCH A SHAME IT WAS WASTED ON *SPIRAL.*
ABOUT YOU LIES BETSY'S CONSCIOUSNESS--HELD IN THRALL BY MOJO AS HER PSYLOCKE'S POWER ENSLAVES THE BRATPACK.
NOW, BEHOLD, AS I DANCE IT--AND YOU--TO *GLORY!*
EVERY FACET OF THE PSYLOCKE'S BEING SHALL BE TORN FROM ITS ROOTS BY MY *CHAOS WALTZ.*
THE MOMENT THOSE PIECES TOUCH MY VORTEX, THEY'LL BE *DESTROYED!* AND BECAUSE THEY'RE PSYCHICALLY LINKED WITH HER, THE BRAT-PACK WILL SHARE HER FATE!
MY LOVELY LUNATIC LIFE-BRINGER, MOJO, SOUGHT TO MAKE THEM *STARS.* HE'S ABOUT TO LEARN THAT'S FAR EASIER SAID THAN DONE--ESPECIALLY WITH PETS WHO ARE NAUGHT BUT HOLLOW, MINDLESS SHELLS. LIVING INCURABLY DEAD.
MOJO ROTS FLESH--SPIRAL ROTS THOUGHT, AND SELF, AND *SPIRIT!*
HE CREATED THE WILDWAYS--BUT IT IS ONLY *SPIRAL'S* RIGHTFUL PLACE TO DANCE UPON IT!

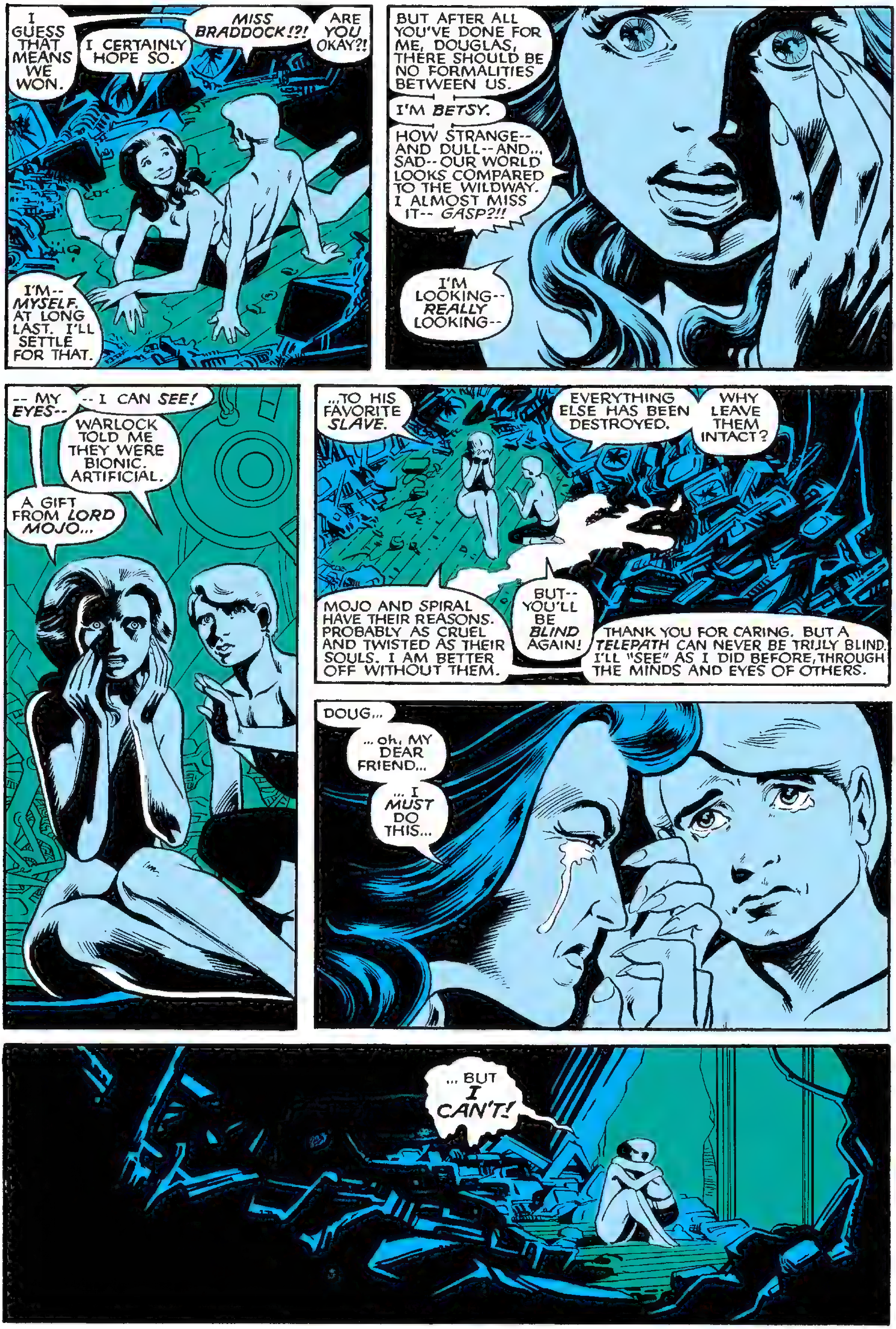

MAXIMAL SENSOR SCAN-- ULTIMATE SPEED DATA EVALUATION AND RESPONSE.
NEVER SAW SO MUCH, THOUGHT SO FAST.
ANALYZE. DEDUCE. ACT.
THIS "LAND" LOOKS SOLID BUT THAT'S MERELY HOW SELF PERCEIVES IT.
IT'S REALLY ENERGY. PATTERNS OF FORCE.
BEFORE CHAOS, THERE WAS ORDER -- A NATURAL STRUCTURE.
THAT CAN BE RE-BORN.
EVERY PIECE OF NONFOE BETSY'S PSYCHE--NO MATTER HOW SMALL--MUST BE CAUGHT BEFORE IT IS OBLITERATED BY CONTACT WITH CAROUSEL.
AND THEN REPLACED IN ITS PROPER POSITION TO RESTORE BETSY'S TRUESELF.
I'LL HAVE TO STRETCH MY SUBSTANCE PRETTY THIN, PAL.
MAYBE TO THE POINT OF DISCORPORATION.
RISK CALCULATED.
FEAR ACKNOWLEDGED.
RESPONSE: YOU BE STRONG, PARTNER...
... SELF WILL BE BRAVE.
TOGETHER, GESTALT SELF WILL PROVE EQUAL TO ANY TASK.
AND WARLOCK FORMS A GIANT NET, COMPLETELY ENCLOSING SPIRAL'S CAROUSEL.
SO FAR, SO GOOD.
THIS IS ALMOST FUN!
I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT DOUG.
I NEVER DREAMED THE PSYCHE-MERGE WOULD OCCUR SO QUICKLY. WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND, I'M BECOMING MORE LIKE HIM--
-- AND HIM, LIKE SELF!
WORSE, WE'RE BOTH STARTING TO THINK THIS IS THE WAY THINGS SHOULD BE!

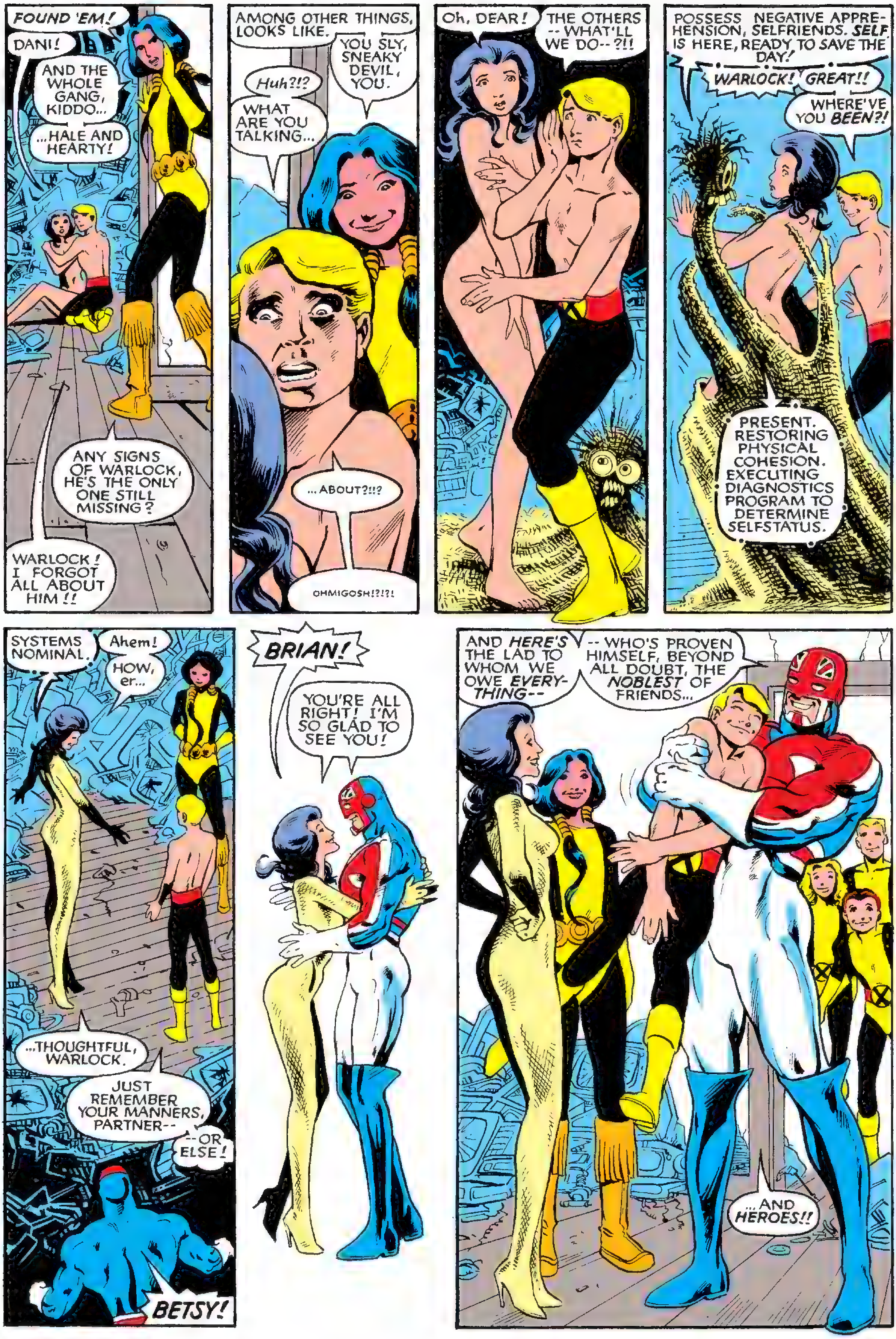

SELFSOULFRIENDWARLOCK'S PERFORMANCE WITHIN OPTIMUM OPERATIONAL PARAMETERS.
SELF MUST NOW INITIATE PHASE TWO.
SELFRIENDS-- REACH OUT! BREAK MUTANTFOESPIRAL'S MINDCHAINS-- STRIKE OUT FOR FREEDOM--
--TAKE SELF'S HAND!
CAROUSEL'S VELOCITY EXTREME.
POSSIBLY BEYOND SELF'S CAPACITY TO WITHSTAND.
DENIAL! IN PSYCHIC ENVIRONMENT...
...STRENGTH IS A FUNCTION OF WILL--
ALARM ALARM ALARM
STRESS THRESHOLD EXCEEDED, SELF COHESION THREATENED--
--AND...
...DETERMINATION!
QUERY?!!
EXTREMITY WAS A CHILD'S. NOW IT IS AN ADULT'S?!
MAGNIFICENT, LAD! YOU DID IT!
IDENTITY UNKNOWN.
VOCAL PATTERNS-- AND HELMET-- INDICATE THAT SELF PERCEIVES TRUE FORM OF SELFRIEND BRIAN BRADDOCK.
LUCK ROT THEIR BONES!
I'M TRAPPED! ALL MY ENERGIES ARE DEVOTED TO DANCING MY VORTEX. DIVERT EVEN THE SMALLEST IOTA TO STOP DOUGLOCK AND THE PSYLOCKE MAY WIN FREE HERSELF.
MY ONLY RECOURSE IS TO COMPLETE HER OBLITERATION BEFORE THEY FINISH-- AND THEN LET HER DEAL WITH THEM.
HERE COME TWO MORE, DOUGLAS!
YYYOWW!
SELF HAS YOU, CHIEFSELFRIEND DANIMIRAGE!
SAFE AND SOUND.
FOR THE PRESENT.
DOUG?! BUT YOUR VOICE-- WHY ARE YOU TALKING LIKE WARLOCK?!!

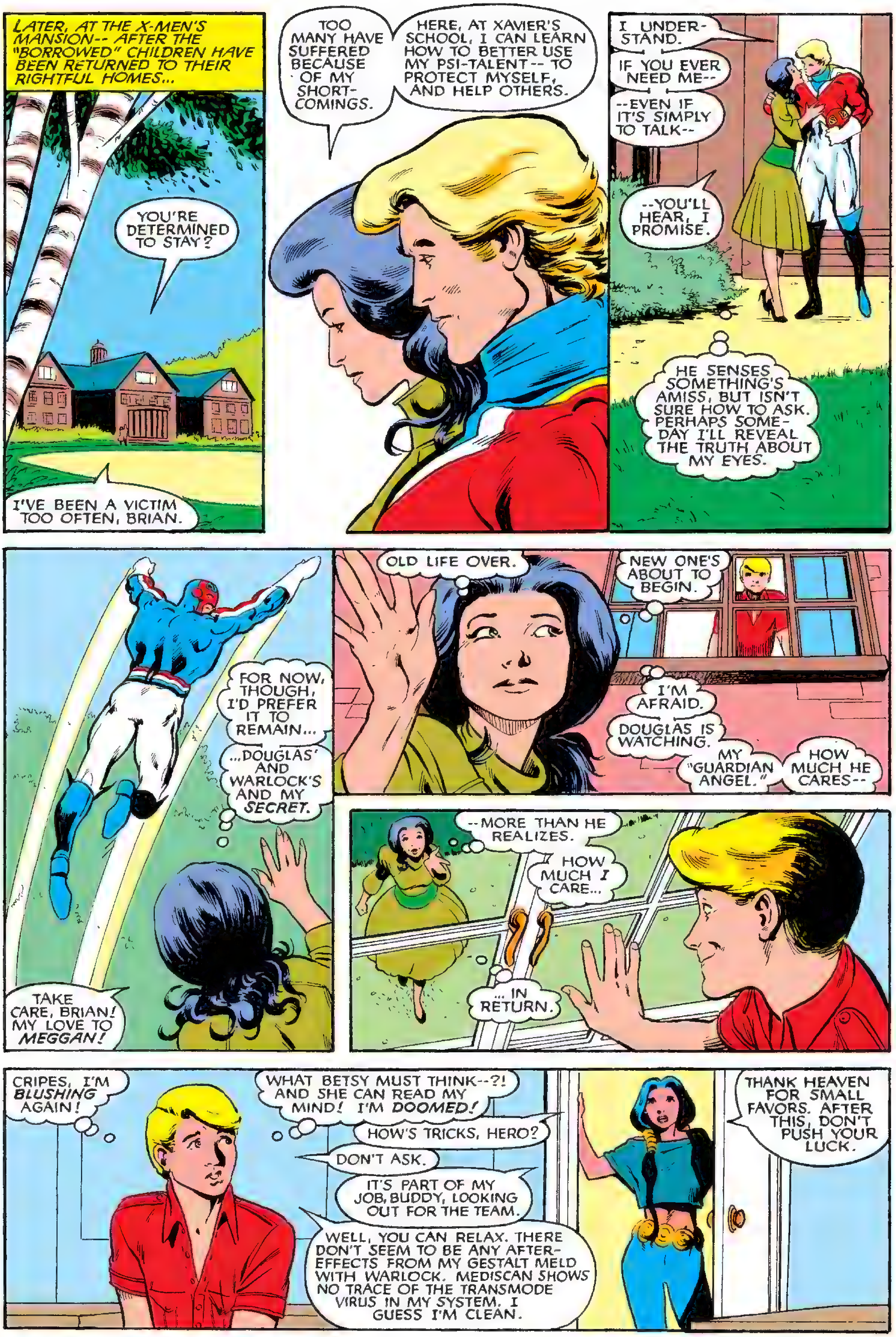

PSYCHEMERGE. PHYSICALITY SYNTHESIS. SELF DOUGLOCKGESTALT-- TWO INTO ONE.
I WARNED HIM, DANI!
BUT WE COULDN'T SEE ANY OTHER WAY TO RESCUE YOU!
THIS IS CRAZY!
THEY'RE ALL PITCHING IN TO HELP, CURSE THEM, IGNORING THE PAIN AND DANGER!
OBSERVATION: SELFOESPIRAL DISPLAYING CONSIDERABLE AGITATION.
SMALL WONDER, PARTNER!
WE'VE GOT THAT GARGOYLE ON THE RUN!
I'M DREAMIN', RIGHT? TOO MUCH PISTACHIO PIZZA.
IT'S PROBABLY YOUR FAULT, BUTCH.
I WANT TO GO HOME.
VORTEX DISSIPATING.
SELFOESPIRAL'S SONG AND DANCE IS OVER.
ONE PIECE LEFT, PAL.
THE LAST...
...AND THE BEST!
YOU DID SOMETHING WRONG!
COURSE HE DID! HE'S A FUNNY LOOKING DUMMY-FREAK ALIEN GEEK-DWEEB--
YOU SHOULD TALK, BUTCH.
--SHUDDUP, DARLA--
--YOU STARTED AN EARTH-QUAKE!
NO! LISTEN TO SPIRAL SCREAM--!
I
WHO SAID THAT?!
AM

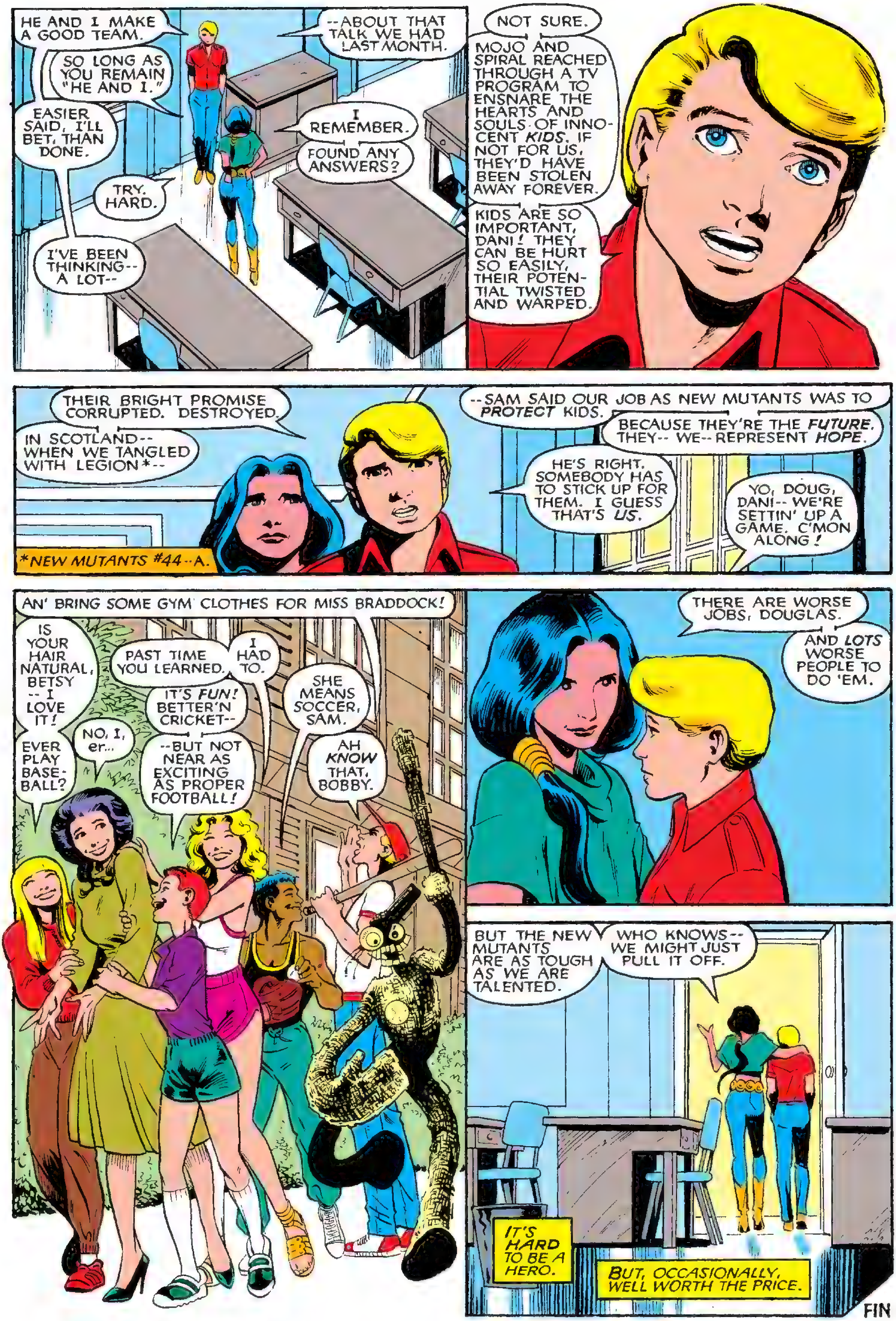

AT LAST
ONCE MORE
I AM
MYSELF
YOU
SPIRAL
SOUGHT MY DESTRUCTION
THINK A MOMENT, PSYLOCKE-- BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING RASH THAT ALL WILL *REGRET!*
CONSIDER THE *PRICE* OF VENGEANCE. AND FREEDOM.
A *SLAVE* KNOWS HER PLACE.
A SLAVE HAS NO WORRIES-- BECAUSE SHE HAS A *VALUE*, AND A GOOD MASTER CARES FOR HIS PROPERTY.
IT'S LIFE WITHOUT CARE OR DANGER. DENY IT-- AND YOU WIN FOR YOURSELF THE "FREEDOM" TO BE HUNGRY, HOMELESS, HURT-- *BLIND!*
AS YOU WERE...
...SO SHALL YOU *BE!*
*MOJO* CAN CHANGE THAT.
LEAVE HER ALONE! SELFRIENDBETSY DID NOT CHOOSE HER SLAVERY! SELFOESPIRAL FORCED IT ON HER--AS SELFOE FORCED IT ON OTHER SELFRIENDS!
THEN LET HER *CHOOSE*, BOYS!
LET *EVERYONE* CHOOSE!
THE WILDWAY OFFERS WONDERS BEYOND COMPREHENSION, ADVENTURES BEYOND IMAGINING, ETERNAL YOUTH AND BEAUTY, THE FULFILLMENT OF EVERY *HEART'S DESIRE.*
YOURS FOR THE ASKING.
ALL YOU NEED DO...
...IS SAY THE WORD.


I HAVE BEEN HUNGRY, SPIRAL, AND HOMELESS-- HUNTED--HURT, IN BODY...
...AND SPIRIT.
ALL THOSE THINGS, I SWORE I WOULD NEVER BE AGAIN.
YOU OFFER SALVATION.
I PREFER TO MAKE MY OWN!
YOU ARE A FOOL, PSYLOCKE!
NO LESS THAN YOU.
BUT FOR BETTER REASONS.
THAT'S DONE.
A PITY SPIRAL ISN'T.
PERHAPS, ANOTHER TIME. BUT FOR NOW, AT LEAST, SHE IS GONE.
I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR HELP, MY FRIENDS...
...AND SORRY FOR YOUR PAIN.
AT THE MOMENT, THOUGH, THE ONLY WAY I CAN MAKE AMENDS...
...IS TO PUT YOU BACK...
...WHERE YOU BELONG.
HOLY CO-OWW!?!
THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE!
SELF IS BACK-- ALIVE-- AWAKE--OKAY-- I THINK I HOPE--
--THE ROOM'S BEEN WRECKED!


I GUESS THAT MEANS WE WON.
I CERTAINLY HOPE SO.
MISS BRADDOCK!?!
ARE *YOU* OKAY?!
I'M-- *MYSELF.* AT LONG LAST. I'LL SETTLE FOR THAT.
BUT AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR ME, DOUGLAS, THERE SHOULD BE NO FORMALITIES BETWEEN US.
I'M *BETSY.*
HOW STRANGE-- AND DULL--AND... SAD--OUR WORLD LOOKS COMPARED TO THE WILDWAY. I ALMOST MISS IT-- *GASP?!!*
I'M LOOKING-- *REALLY* LOOKING--
-- MY *EYES*--
-- I CAN *SEE!*
WARLOCK TOLD ME THEY WERE BIONIC. ARTIFICIAL.
A GIFT FROM *LORD MOJO...*
...TO HIS FAVORITE *SLAVE.*
EVERYTHING ELSE HAS BEEN DESTROYED.
WHY LEAVE THEM INTACT?
MOJO AND SPIRAL HAVE THEIR REASONS. PROBABLY AS CRUEL AND TWISTED AS THEIR SOULS. I AM BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM.
BUT-- YOU'LL BE *BLIND* AGAIN!
THANK YOU FOR CARING. BUT A *TELEPATH* CAN NEVER BE TRULY BLIND. I'LL "SEE" AS I DID BEFORE, THROUGH THE MINDS AND EYES OF OTHERS.
DOUG...
... oh, MY DEAR FRIEND...
... I *MUST* DO THIS...
... BUT *I CAN'T!*


FOUND 'EM!
DANI!
AND THE WHOLE GANG, KIDDO...
...HALE AND HEARTY!
ANY SIGNS OF WARLOCK, HE'S THE ONLY ONE STILL MISSING?
WARLOCK! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT HIM!!
AMONG OTHER THINGS, LOOKS LIKE.
YOU SLY, SNEAKY DEVIL, YOU.
Huh?!?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING...
...ABOUT?!!?
OHMIGOSH!?!?!
Oh, DEAR!
THE OTHERS -- WHAT'LL WE DO--?!!
POSSESS NEGATIVE APPREHENSION, SELFRIENDS. SELF IS HERE, READY TO SAVE THE DAY!
WARLOCK! GREAT!!
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?!
PRESENT. RESTORING PHYSICAL COHESION. EXECUTING DIAGNOSTICS PROGRAM TO DETERMINE SELFSTATUS.
SYSTEMS NOMINAL.
Ahem!
HOW, er...
...THOUGHTFUL, WARLOCK.
JUST REMEMBER YOUR MANNERS, PARTNER--
--OR ELSE!
BETSY!
BRIAN!
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU!
AND HERE'S THE LAD TO WHOM WE OWE EVERYTHING--
-- WHO'S PROVEN HIMSELF, BEYOND ALL DOUBT, THE NOBLEST OF FRIENDS...
...AND HEROES!!


LATER, AT THE X-MEN'S MANSION-- AFTER THE "BORROWED" CHILDREN HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THEIR RIGHTFUL HOMES...
YOU'RE DETERMINED TO STAY?
I'VE BEEN A VICTIM TOO OFTEN, BRIAN.
TOO MANY HAVE SUFFERED BECAUSE OF MY SHORT-COMINGS.
HERE, AT XAVIER'S SCHOOL, I CAN LEARN HOW TO BETTER USE MY PSI-TALENT -- TO PROTECT MYSELF, AND HELP OTHERS.
I UNDERSTAND.
IF YOU EVER NEED ME--
--EVEN IF IT'S SIMPLY TO TALK--
--YOU'LL HEAR, I PROMISE.
HE SENSES SOMETHING'S AMISS, BUT ISN'T SURE HOW TO ASK. PERHAPS SOMEDAY I'LL REVEAL THE TRUTH ABOUT MY EYES.
FOR NOW, THOUGH, I'D PREFER IT TO REMAIN...
...DOUGLAS' AND WARLOCK'S AND MY *SECRET*.
TAKE CARE, BRIAN! MY LOVE TO *MEGGAN*!
OLD LIFE OVER.
NEW ONE'S ABOUT TO BEGIN.
I'M AFRAID.
DOUGLAS IS WATCHING.
MY "GUARDIAN ANGEL."
HOW MUCH HE CARES--
--MORE THAN HE REALIZES.
HOW MUCH *I* CARE...
... IN RETURN.
CRIPES, I'M *BLUSHING* AGAIN!
WHAT BETSY MUST THINK--?! AND SHE CAN READ MY MIND! I'M *DOOMED!*
HOW'S TRICKS, HERO?
DON'T ASK.
IT'S PART OF MY JOB, BUDDY, LOOKING OUT FOR THE TEAM.
THANK HEAVEN FOR SMALL FAVORS. AFTER THIS, DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK.
WELL, YOU CAN RELAX. THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY AFTER-EFFECTS FROM MY GESTALT MELD WITH WARLOCK. MEDISCAN SHOWS NO TRACE OF THE TRANSMODE VIRUS IN MY SYSTEM. I GUESS I'M CLEAN.


HE AND I MAKE A GOOD TEAM.
SO LONG AS YOU REMAIN "HE AND I."
EASIER SAID, I'LL BET, THAN DONE.
TRY. HARD.
I'VE BEEN THINKING-- A LOT--
--ABOUT THAT TALK WE HAD LAST MONTH.
I REMEMBER.
FOUND ANY ANSWERS?
NOT SURE.
MOJO AND SPIRAL REACHED THROUGH A TV PROGRAM TO ENSNARE THE HEARTS AND SOULS OF INNOCENT *KIDS*. IF NOT FOR US, THEY'D HAVE BEEN STOLEN AWAY FOREVER.
KIDS ARE SO IMPORTANT, DANI! THEY CAN BE HURT SO EASILY, THEIR POTENTIAL TWISTED AND WARPED.
THEIR BRIGHT PROMISE CORRUPTED. DESTROYED.
IN SCOTLAND-- WHEN WE TANGLED WITH LEGION*--
--SAM SAID OUR JOB AS NEW MUTANTS WAS TO *PROTECT* KIDS.
BECAUSE THEY'RE THE *FUTURE*. THEY-- WE-- REPRESENT *HOPE*.
HE'S RIGHT. SOMEBODY HAS TO STICK UP FOR THEM. I GUESS THAT'S *US*.
YO, DOUG, DANI-- WE'RE SETTIN' UP A GAME. C'MON ALONG!
**NEW MUTANTS #44--A.*
AN' BRING SOME GYM CLOTHES FOR MISS BRADDOCK!
IS YOUR HAIR NATURAL, BETSY -- I LOVE IT!
EVER PLAY BASEBALL?
NO, I, er...
PAST TIME YOU LEARNED.
I HAD TO.
IT'S *FUN!* BETTER'N CRICKET--
--BUT NOT NEAR AS EXCITING AS PROPER FOOTBALL!
SHE MEANS SOCCER, SAM.
AH *KNOW* THAT, BOBBY.
THERE ARE WORSE JOBS, DOUGLAS.
AND *LOTS* WORSE PEOPLE TO DO 'EM.
BUT THE NEW MUTANTS ARE AS TOUGH AS WE ARE TALENTED.
WHO KNOWS-- WE MIGHT JUST PULL IT OFF.
*IT'S HARD TO BE A HERO.*
*BUT, OCCASIONALLY, WELL WORTH THE PRICE.*

FIN

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25TH
ANNIVERSARY
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10 • 1986
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE ALL NEW
X-MEN®
GIANT-SIZED ANNUAL
INTRODUCING: the NEWEST X-MAN-- LONGSHOT!™
ARTHUR ADAMS 7-86 AND

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
PERFORMANCE
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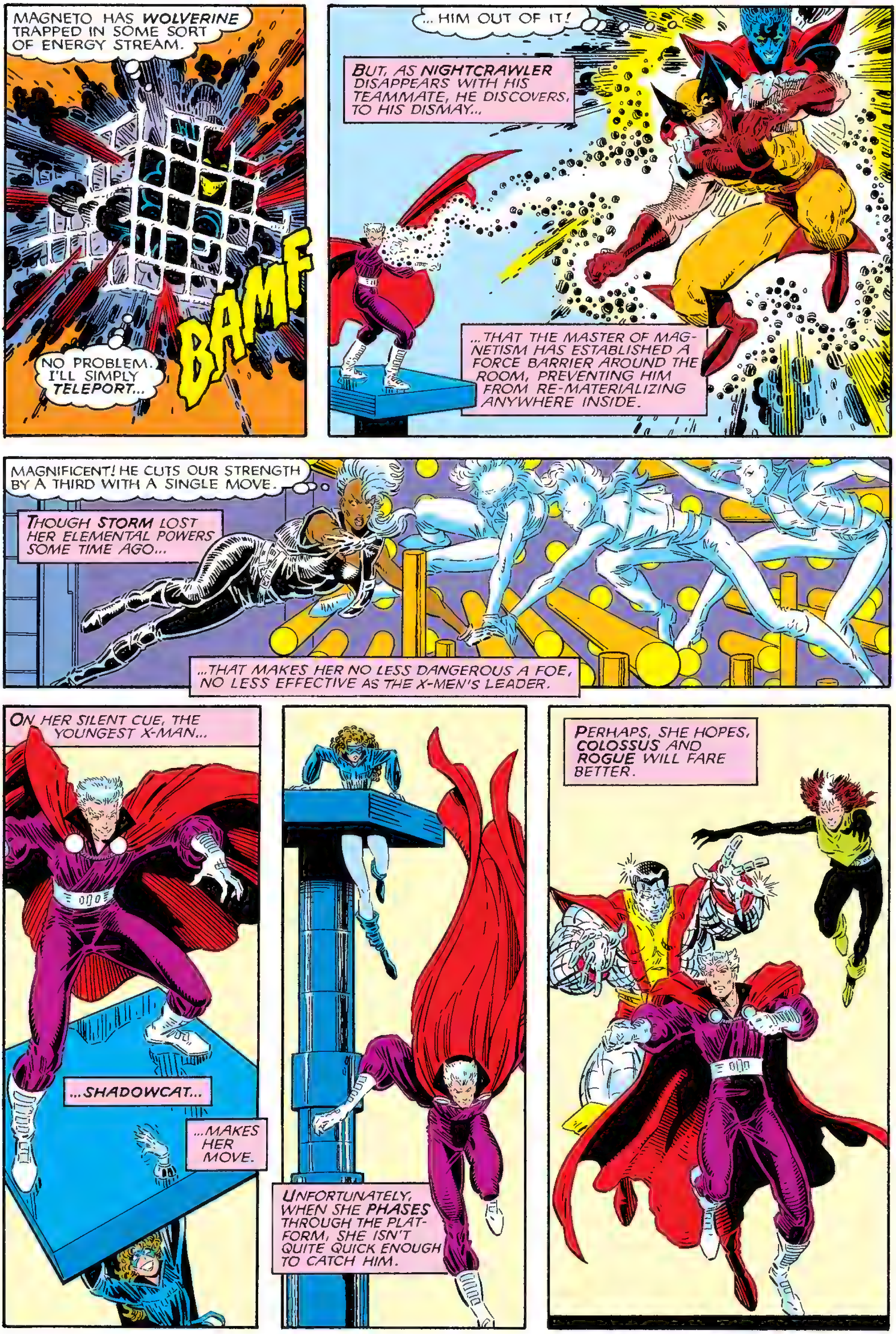
PETRA SCOTESE COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF
THIS IS THE DANGER ROOM, HEART OF A SECRET TRAINING COMPLEX BURIED 30 METERS BELOW PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS, PROBABLY THE MOST EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE ACADEMY IN THE WORLD--BECAUSE ITS STUDENTS ARE ALL MUTANTS, "GIFTED" AT BIRTH WITH EXTRAORDINARY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ABILITIES. HERE, IN LARGE MEASURE, THEY LEARN HOW TO PROPERLY USE THEM.
THE CURRENT EXERCISE INVOLVES THE SCHOOL'S SENIOR TEAM-- BONA FIDE SUPER HEROES-- THE UNCANNY X-MEN.
THEY'RE ENGAGED IN A GAME OF TAG WITH THE NEW HEADMASTER, MAGNETO. ALL THEY HAVE TO DO TO WIN IS TOUCH HIM.


MAGNETO HAS WOLVERINE TRAPPED IN SOME SORT OF ENERGY STREAM.
NO PROBLEM. I'LL SIMPLY TELEPORT...
BAMF
...HIM OUT OF IT!
BUT, AS NIGHTCRAWLER DISAPPEARS WITH HIS TEAMMATE, HE DISCOVERS, TO HIS DISMAY...
...THAT THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM HAS ESTABLISHED A FORCE BARRIER AROUND THE ROOM, PREVENTING HIM FROM RE-MATERIALIZING ANYWHERE INSIDE.
MAGNIFICENT! HE CUTS OUR STRENGTH BY A THIRD WITH A SINGLE MOVE.
THOUGH STORM LOST HER ELEMENTAL POWERS SOME TIME AGO...
...THAT MAKES HER NO LESS DANGEROUS A FOE, NO LESS EFFECTIVE AS THE X-MEN'S LEADER.
ON HER SILENT CUE, THE YOUNGEST X-MAN...
...SHADOWCAT...
...MAKES HER MOVE.
UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN SHE PHASES THROUGH THE PLATFORM, SHE ISN'T QUITE QUICK ENOUGH TO CATCH HIM.
PERHAPS, SHE HOPES, COLOSSUS AND ROGUE WILL FARE BETTER.

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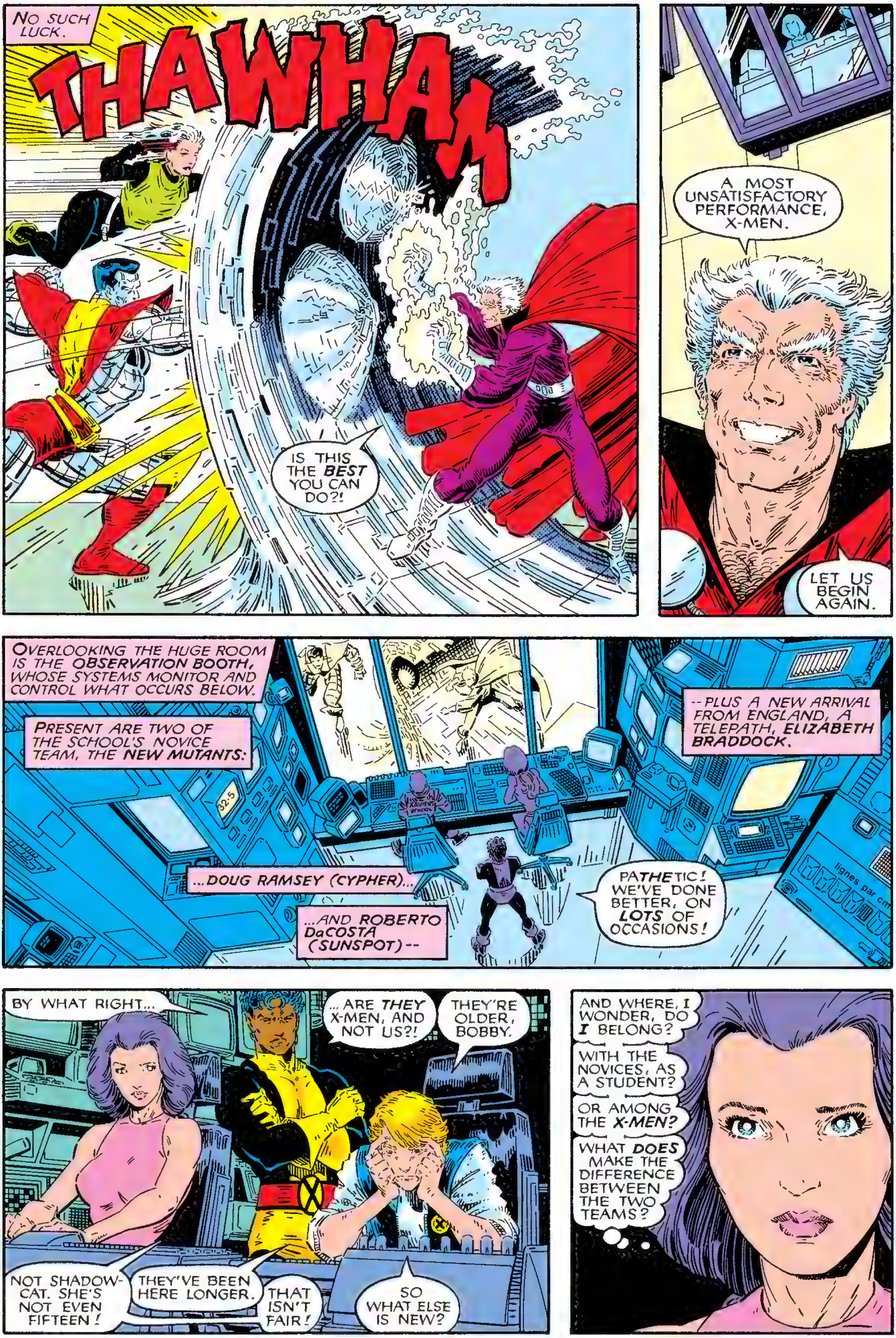
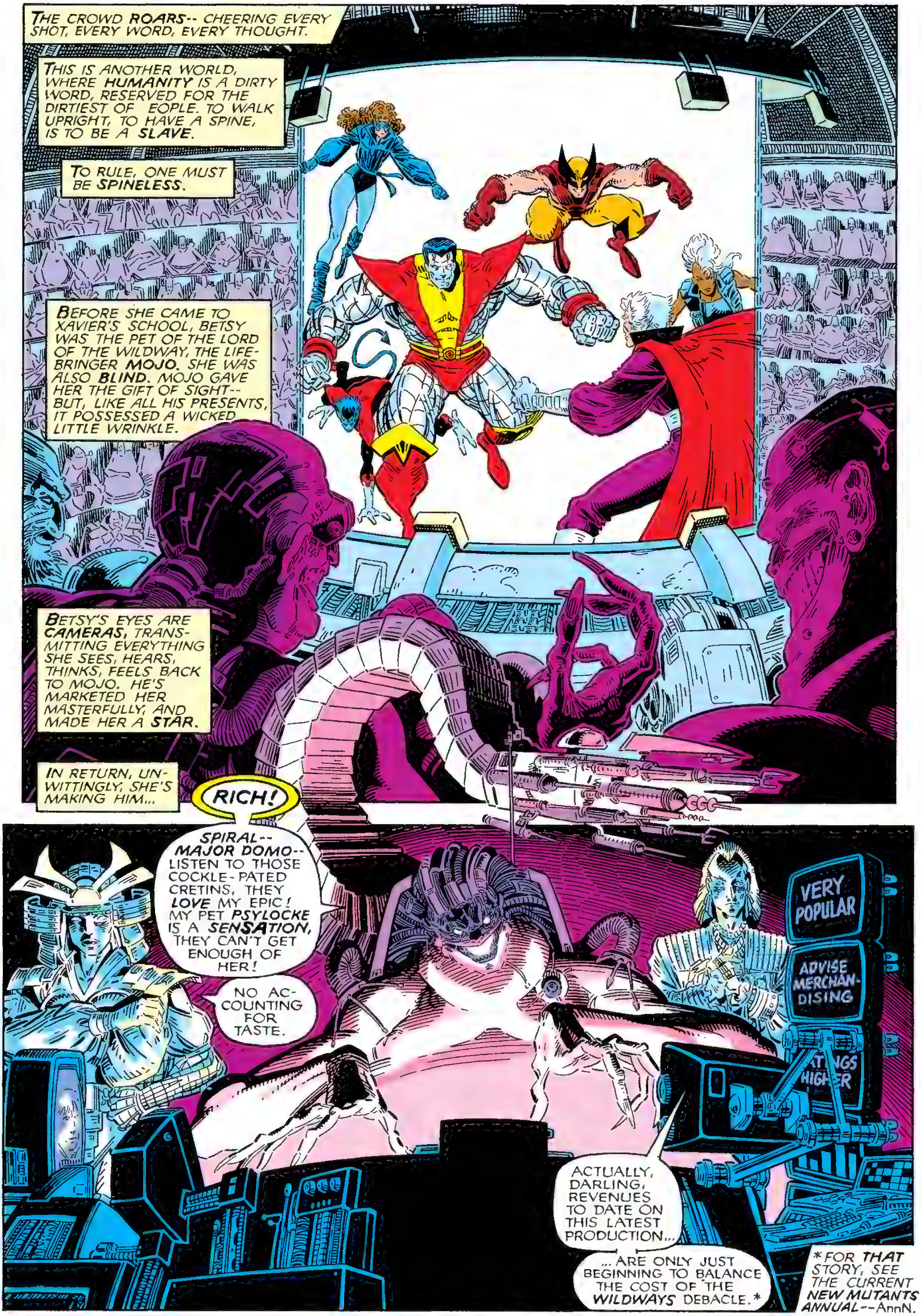
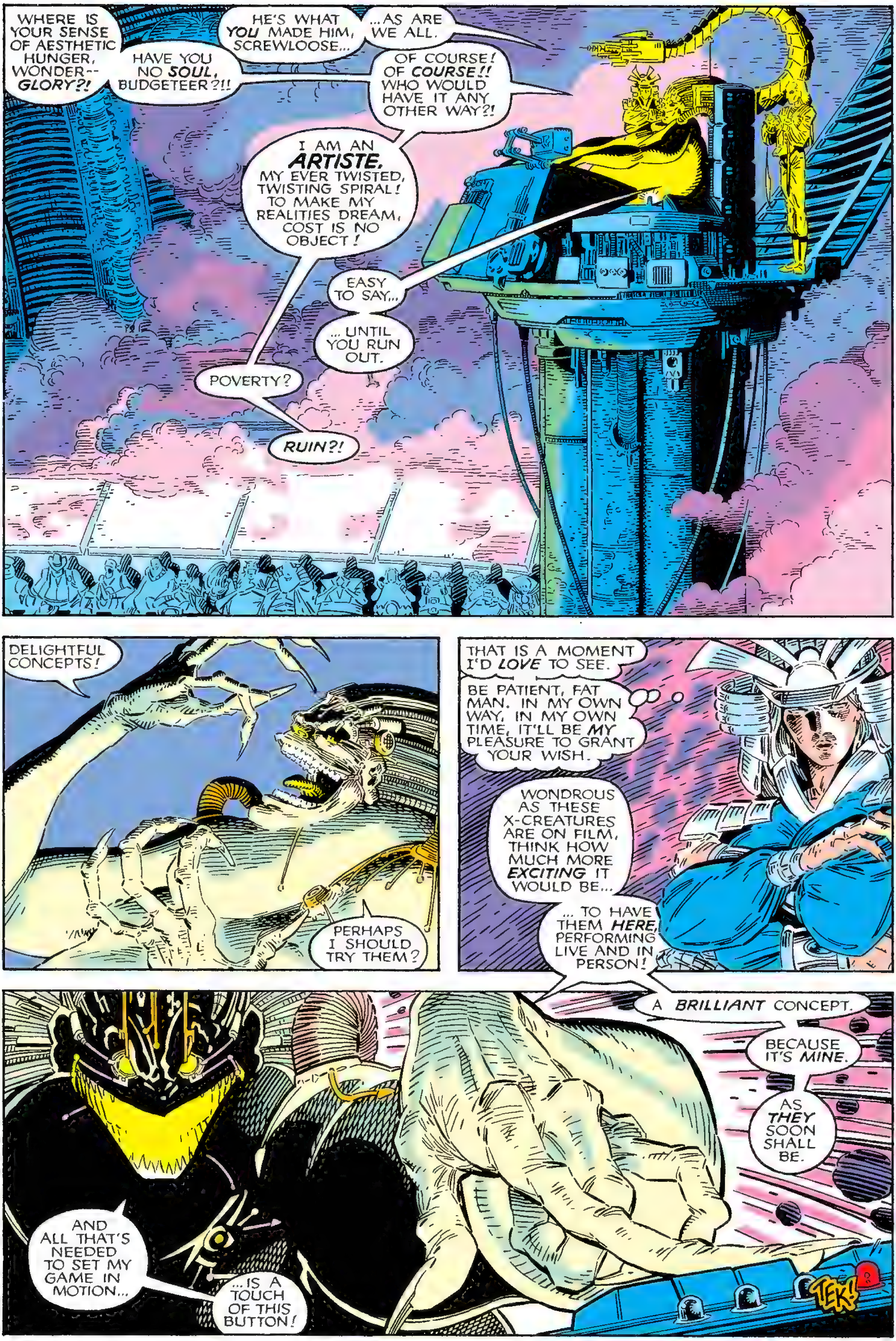
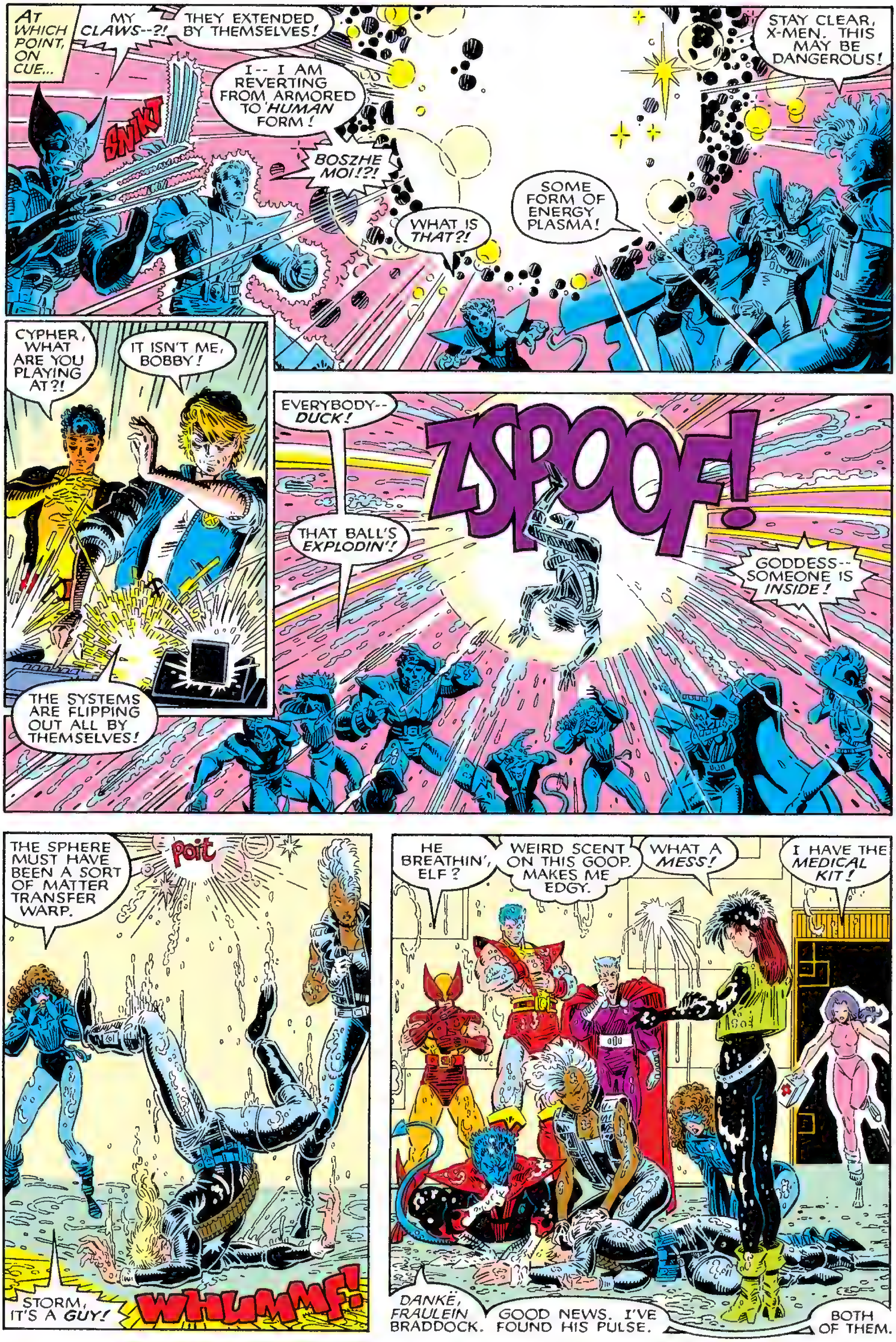
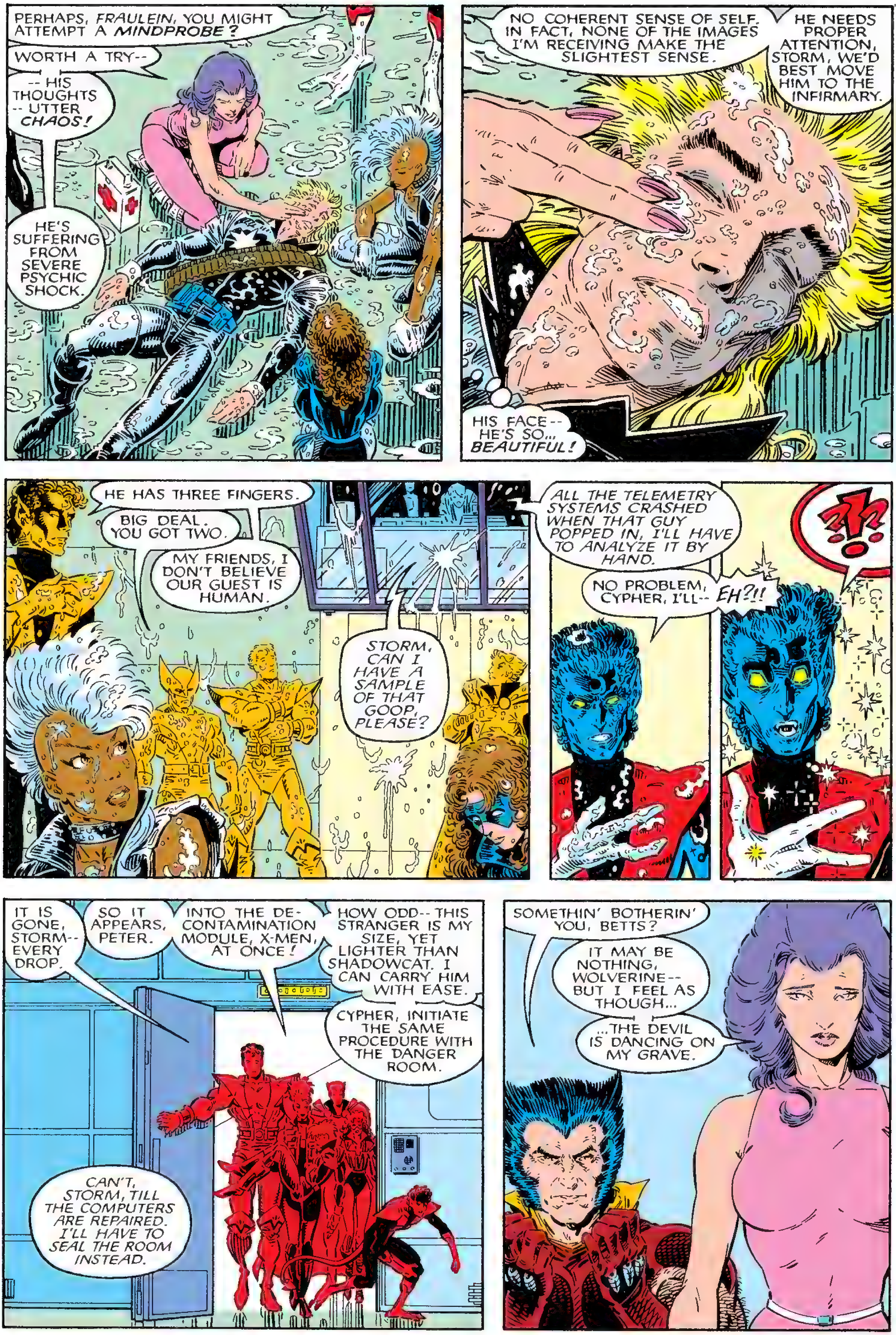
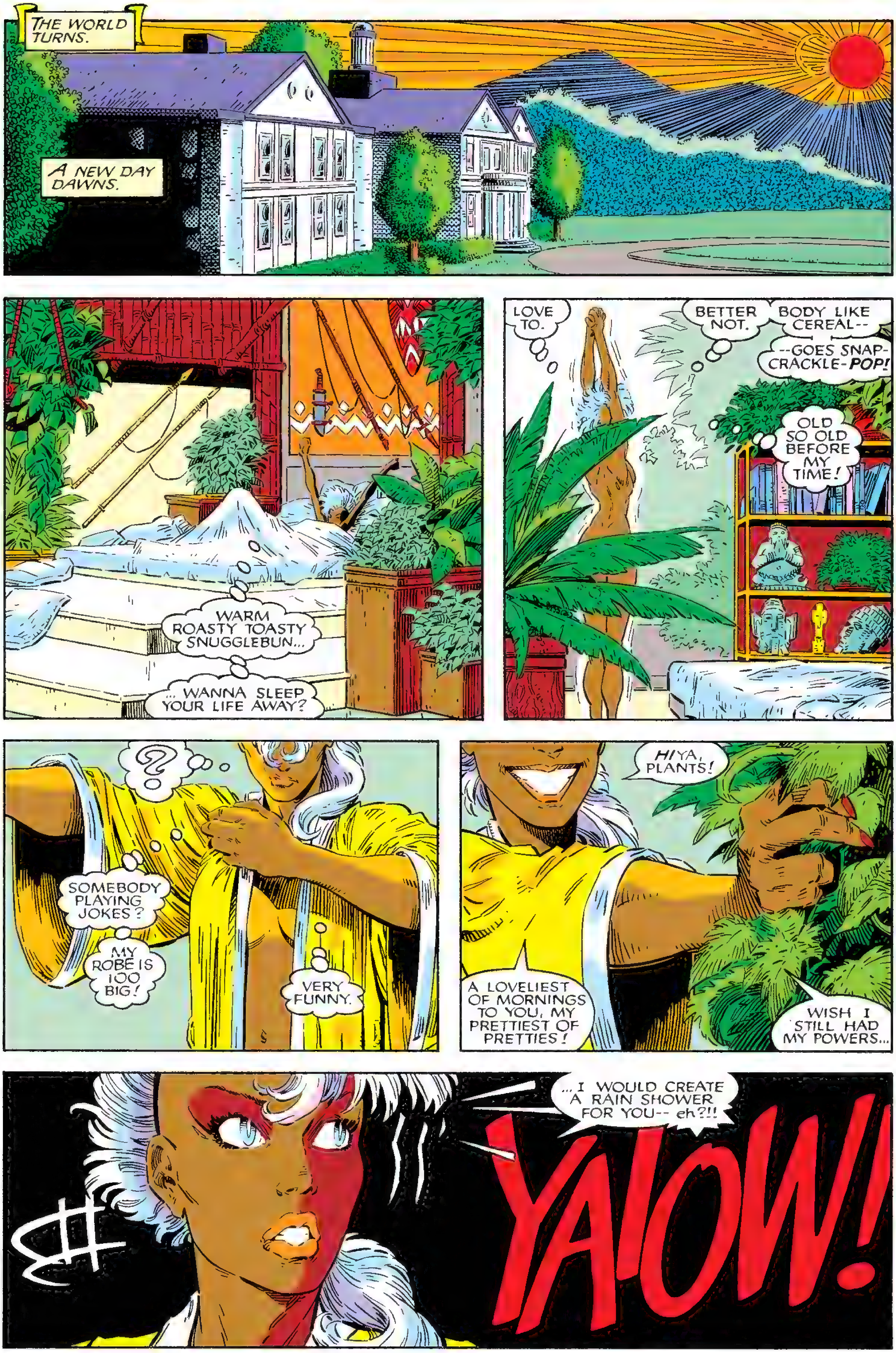

NO SUCH LUCK.
THAWHAM
IS THIS THE **BEST** YOU CAN DO?!
A MOST UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE, X-MEN.
LET US BEGIN AGAIN.
OVERLOOKING THE HUGE ROOM IS THE **OBSERVATION BOOTH**, WHOSE SYSTEMS MONITOR AND CONTROL WHAT OCCURS BELOW.
PRESENT ARE TWO OF THE SCHOOL'S NOVICE TEAM, THE **NEW MUTANTS**:
...**DOUG RAMSEY (CYPHER)**...
...AND **ROBERTO DaCOSTA (SUNSPOT)**--
--PLUS A NEW ARRIVAL FROM ENGLAND, A TELEPATH, **ELIZABETH BRADDOCK**.
PA*THE*TIC! WE'VE DONE BETTER, ON **LOTS** OF OCCASIONS!
lignes par cm
BY WHAT RIGHT...
... ARE **THEY** X-MEN, AND NOT US?!
THEY'RE OLDER, BOBBY.
NOT SHADOWCAT. SHE'S NOT EVEN FIFTEEN!
THEY'VE BEEN HERE LONGER.
THAT ISN'T FAIR!
SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?
AND WHERE, I WONDER, DO **I** BELONG?
WITH THE NOVICES, AS A STUDENT?
OR AMONG THE **X-MEN?**
WHAT **DOES** MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO TEAMS?

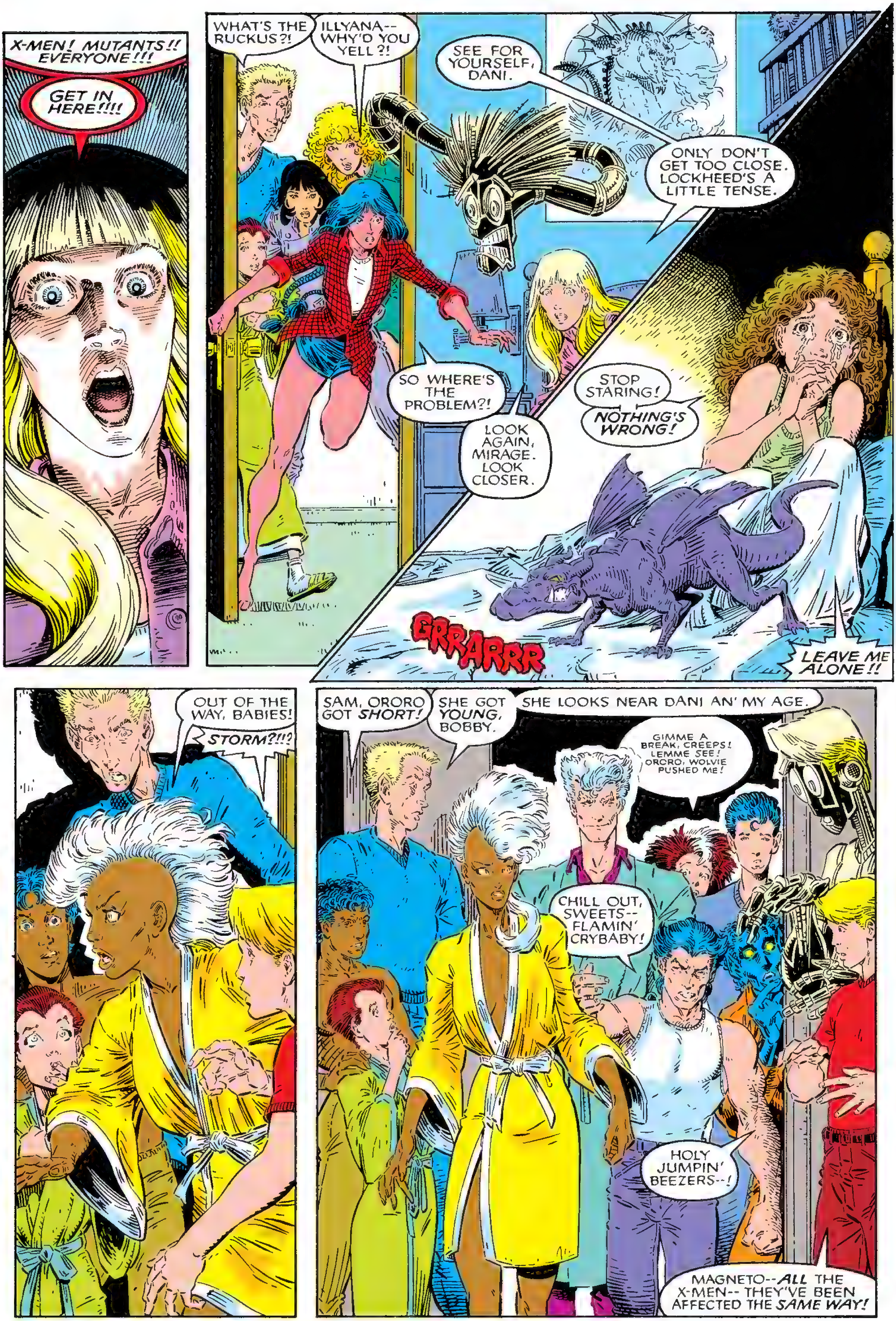

THE CROWD ROARS-- CHEERING EVERY SHOT, EVERY WORD, EVERY THOUGHT.
THIS IS ANOTHER WORLD, WHERE HUMANITY IS A DIRTY WORD, RESERVED FOR THE DIRTIEST OF PEOPLE. TO WALK UPRIGHT, TO HAVE A SPINE, IS TO BE A SLAVE.
TO RULE, ONE MUST BE SPINELESS.
BEFORE SHE CAME TO XAVIER'S SCHOOL, BETSY WAS THE PET OF THE LORD OF THE WILDWAY, THE LIFE-BRINGER MOJO. SHE WAS ALSO BLIND. MOJO GAVE HER THE GIFT OF SIGHT-- BUT, LIKE ALL HIS PRESENTS, IT POSSESSED A WICKED LITTLE WRINKLE.
BETSY'S EYES ARE CAMERAS, TRANSMITTING EVERYTHING SHE SEES, HEARS, THINKS, FEELS BACK TO MOJO. HE'S MARKETED HER MASTERFULLY, AND MADE HER A STAR.
IN RETURN, UNWITTINGLY, SHE'S MAKING HIM...
RICH!
SPIRAL-- MAJOR DOMO-- LISTEN TO THOSE COCKLE-PATED CRETINS. THEY LOVE MY EPIC! MY PET PSYLOCKE IS A SENSATION, THEY CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF HER!
NO ACCOUNTING FOR TASTE.
VERY POPULAR
ADVISE MERCHANDISING
ACTUALLY, DARLING, REVENUES TO DATE ON THIS LATEST PRODUCTION...
...ARE ONLY JUST BEGINNING TO BALANCE THE COST OF THE WILDWAYS DEBACLE.*
*FOR THAT STORY, SEE THE CURRENT NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL--AnnN.

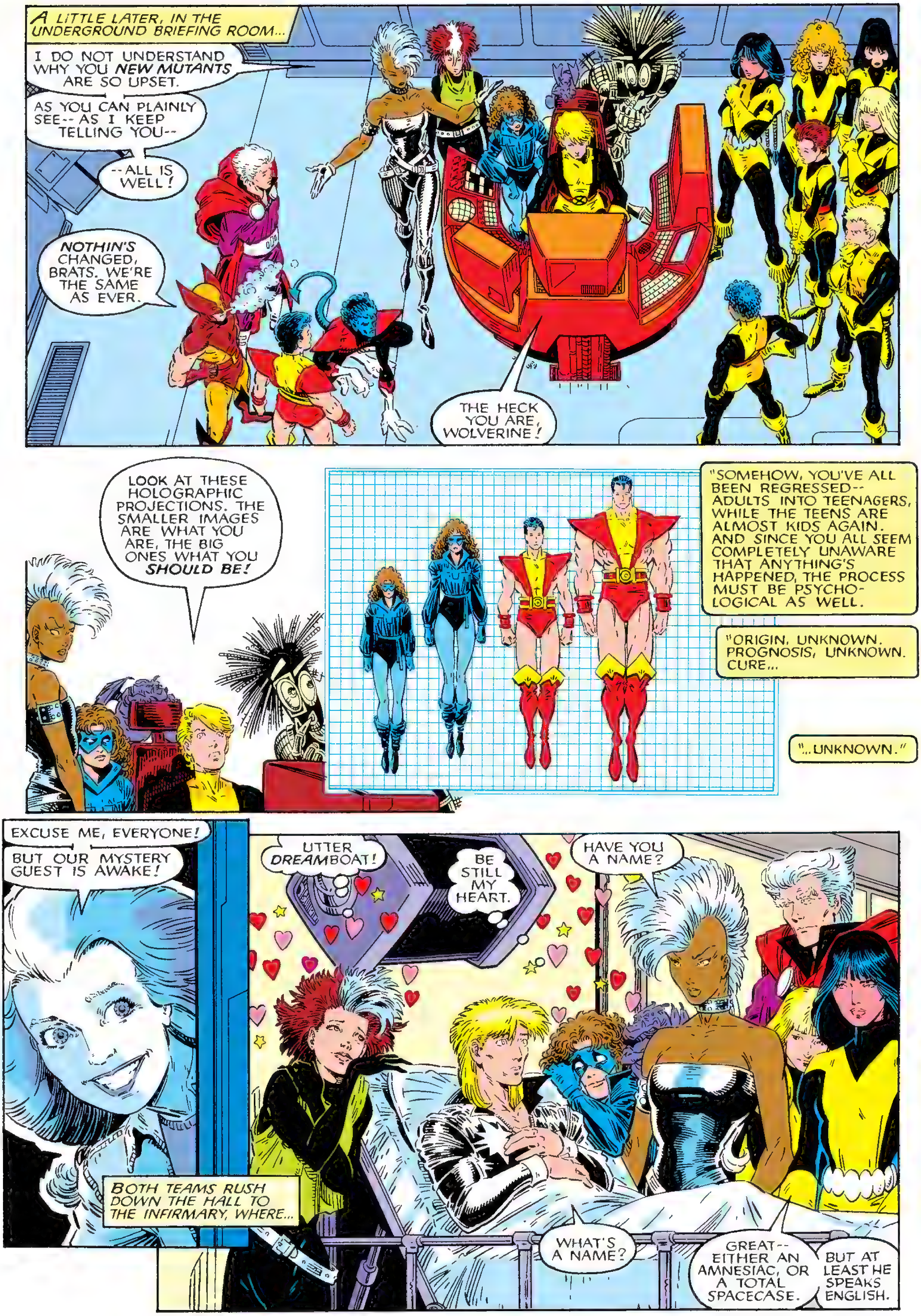

WHERE IS YOUR SENSE OF AESTHETIC HUNGER, WONDER--*GLORY?!*
HAVE YOU NO **SOUL,** BUDGETEER?!!
HE'S WHAT *YOU* MADE HIM, SCREWLOOSE...
...AS ARE WE ALL.
OF COURSE! OF ***COURSE!!*** WHO WOULD HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY?!
I AM AN ***ARTISTE.*** MY EVER TWISTED, TWISTING SPIRAL! TO MAKE MY REALITIES DREAM, COST IS NO OBJECT!
EASY TO SAY...
... UNTIL YOU RUN OUT.
POVERTY?
*RUIN?!*
DELIGHTFUL CONCEPTS!
PERHAPS I SHOULD TRY THEM?
THAT IS A MOMENT I'D *LOVE* TO SEE.
BE PATIENT, FAT MAN. IN MY OWN WAY, IN MY OWN TIME, IT'LL BE *MY* PLEASURE TO GRANT YOUR WISH.
WONDROUS AS THESE X-CREATURES ARE ON FILM, THINK HOW MUCH MORE *EXCITING* IT WOULD BE...
... TO HAVE THEM *HERE,* PERFORMING LIVE AND IN PERSON!
A *BRILLIANT* CONCEPT.
BECAUSE IT'S *MINE.*
AS *THEY* SOON SHALL BE.
AND ALL THAT'S NEEDED TO SET MY GAME IN MOTION...
...IS A TOUCH OF THIS BUTTON!
TEK!

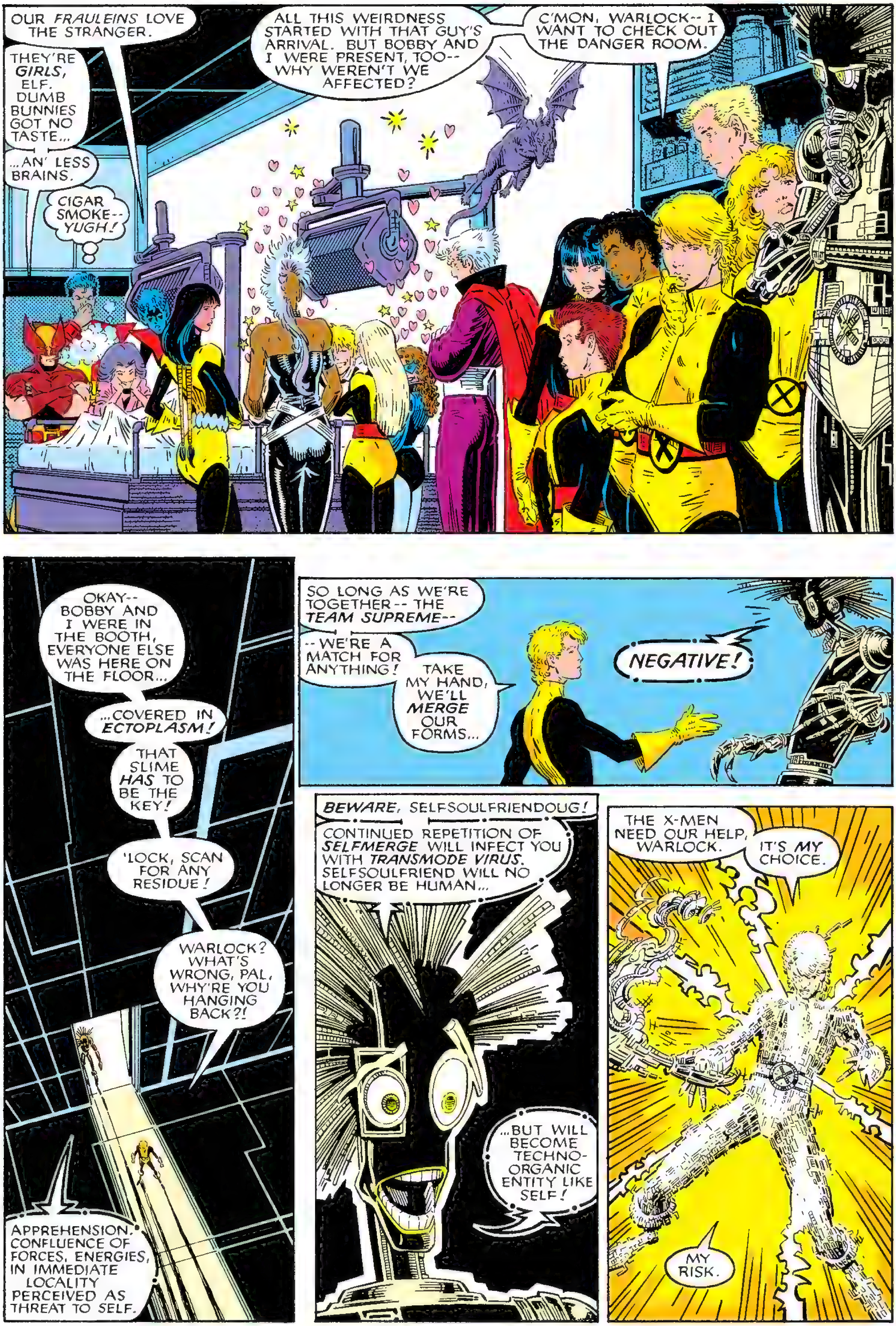

AT WHICH POINT, ON CUE...
MY *CLAWS*--?!
THEY EXTENDED BY THEMSELVES!
SNIKT
I-- I AM REVERTING FROM ARMORED TO '*HUMAN* FORM!
*BOSZHE MOI!?!*
WHAT IS *THAT?!*
SOME FORM OF ENERGY PLASMA!
STAY CLEAR, X-MEN. THIS MAY BE DANGEROUS!
CYPHER, WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT?!
IT ISN'T ME, BOBBY!
THE SYSTEMS ARE FLIPPING OUT ALL BY THEMSELVES!
EVERYBODY-- *DUCK!*
ZSPOOF!
THAT BALL'S *EXPLODIN'!*
GODDESS-- SOMEONE IS *INSIDE!*
THE SPHERE MUST HAVE BEEN A SORT OF MATTER TRANSFER WARP.
poit
STORM, IT'S A *GUY!*
WHUMMF!
HE BREATHIN', ELF?
WEIRD SCENT ON THIS GOOP. MAKES ME EDGY.
WHAT A *MESS!*
I HAVE THE *MEDICAL KIT!*
*DANKË, FRAULEIN* BRADDOCK.
GOOD NEWS. I'VE FOUND HIS PULSE.
BOTH OF THEM.

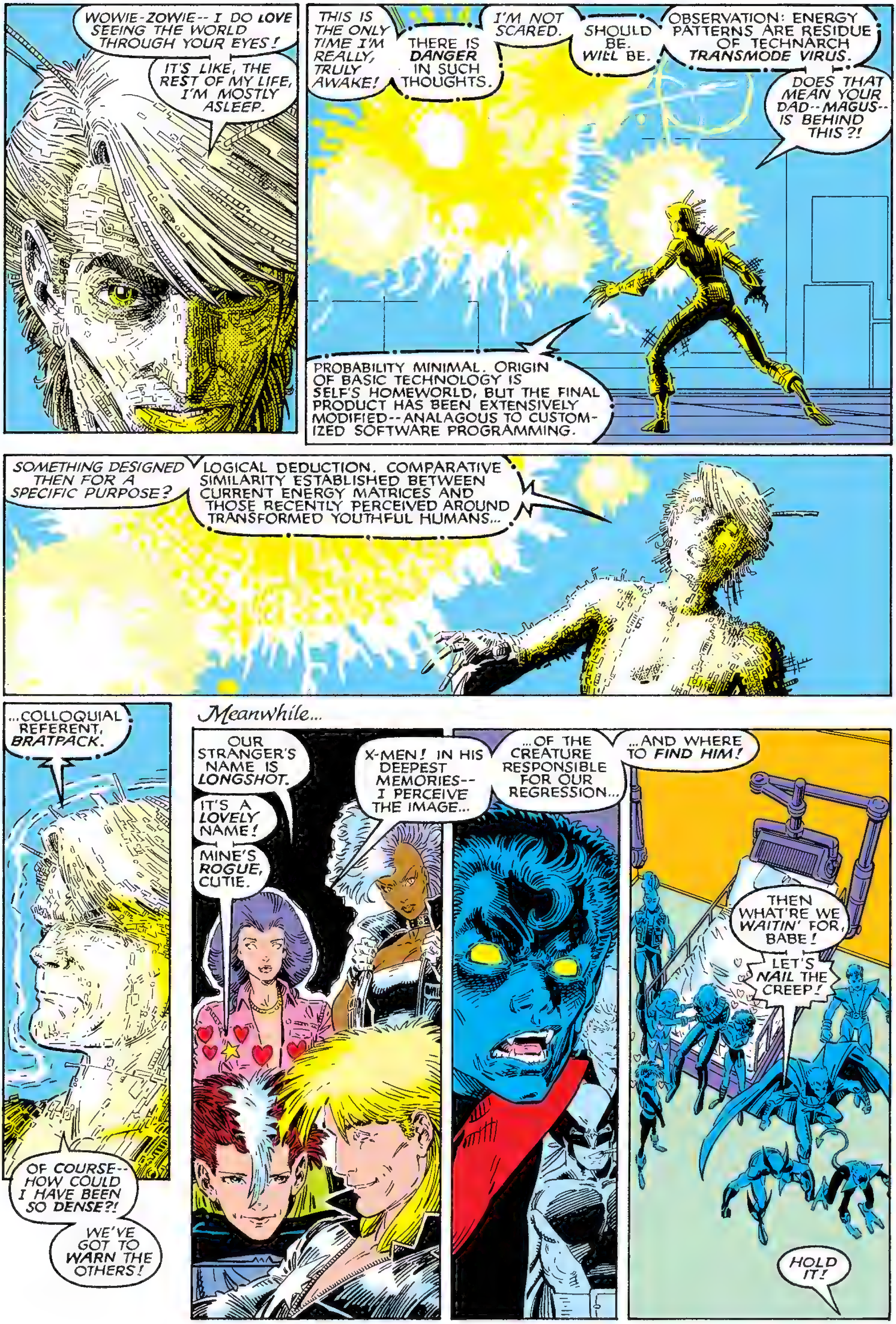

PERHAPS, *FRAULEIN*, YOU MIGHT ATTEMPT A ***MINDPROBE?***
WORTH A TRY--
-- HIS THOUGHTS -- UTTER ***CHAOS!***
HE'S SUFFERING FROM SEVERE PSYCHIC SHOCK.
NO COHERENT SENSE OF SELF. IN FACT, NONE OF THE IMAGES I'M RECEIVING MAKE THE SLIGHTEST SENSE.
HE NEEDS PROPER ATTENTION, STORM, WE'D BEST MOVE HIM TO THE INFIRMARY.
HIS FACE -- HE'S SO... ***BEAUTIFUL!***
HE HAS THREE FINGERS.
BIG DEAL. YOU GOT TWO.
MY FRIENDS, I DON'T BELIEVE OUR GUEST IS HUMAN.
*STORM, CAN I HAVE A SAMPLE OF THAT GOOP, PLEASE?*
*ALL THE TELEMETRY SYSTEMS CRASHED WHEN THAT GUY POPPED IN. I'LL HAVE TO ANALYZE IT BY HAND.*
NO PROBLEM, CYPHER, I'LL-- *EH?!!*
?!?
IT IS GONE, STORM-- EVERY DROP.
SO IT APPEARS, PETER.
INTO THE DE-CONTAMINATION MODULE, X-MEN, AT ONCE!
HOW ODD-- THIS STRANGER IS MY SIZE, YET LIGHTER THAN SHADOWCAT. I CAN CARRY HIM WITH EASE.
CYPHER, INITIATE THE SAME PROCEDURE WITH THE DANGER ROOM.
*CAN'T, STORM, TILL THE COMPUTERS ARE REPAIRED. I'LL HAVE TO SEAL THE ROOM INSTEAD.*
SOMETHIN' BOTHERIN' YOU, BETTS?
IT MAY BE NOTHING, WOLVERINE-- BUT I FEEL AS THOUGH...
...THE DEVIL IS DANCING ON MY GRAVE.

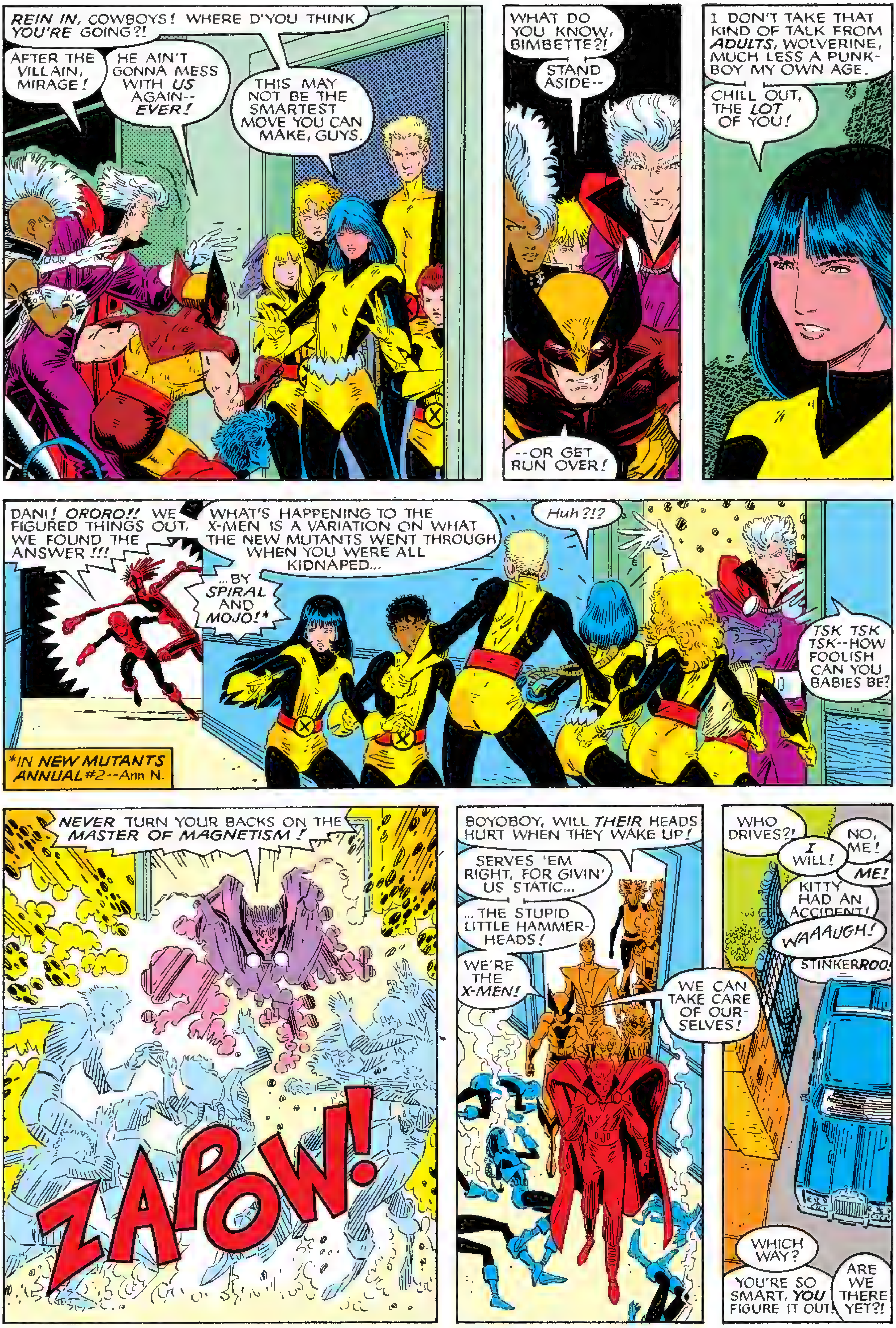

THE WORLD TURNS.
A NEW DAY DAWNS.
WARM ROASTY TOASTY SNUGGLEBUN...
...WANNA SLEEP YOUR LIFE AWAY?
LOVE TO.
BETTER NOT.
BODY LIKE CEREAL--
--GOES SNAP-CRACKLE-POP!
OLD SO OLD BEFORE MY TIME!
?
SOMEBODY PLAYING JOKES?
MY ROBE IS TOO BIG!
VERY FUNNY.
HIYA, PLANTS!
A LOVELIEST OF MORNINGS TO YOU, MY PRETTIEST OF PRETTIES!
WISH I STILL HAD MY POWERS...
...I WOULD CREATE A RAIN SHOWER FOR YOU-- eh?!!
YAOW!


X-MEN! MUTANTS!! EVERYONE!!!
GET IN HERE!!!!
WHAT'S THE RUCKUS?!
ILLYANA-- WHY'D YOU YELL?!
SEE FOR YOURSELF, DANI.
ONLY DON'T GET TOO CLOSE. LOCKHEED'S A LITTLE TENSE.
SO WHERE'S THE PROBLEM?!
LOOK AGAIN, MIRAGE. LOOK CLOSER.
STOP STARING!
NOTHING'S WRONG!
GRRARRR
LEAVE ME ALONE!!
OUT OF THE WAY, BABIES!
STORM?!!?
SAM, ORORO GOT SHORT!
SHE GOT YOUNG, BOBBY.
SHE LOOKS NEAR DANI AN' MY AGE.
GIMME A BREAK, CREEPS! LEMME SEE! ORORO, WOLVIE PUSHED ME!
CHILL OUT, SWEETS-- FLAMIN' CRYBABY!
HOLY JUMPIN' BEEZERS--!
MAGNETO--ALL THE X-MEN-- THEY'VE BEEN AFFECTED THE SAME WAY!

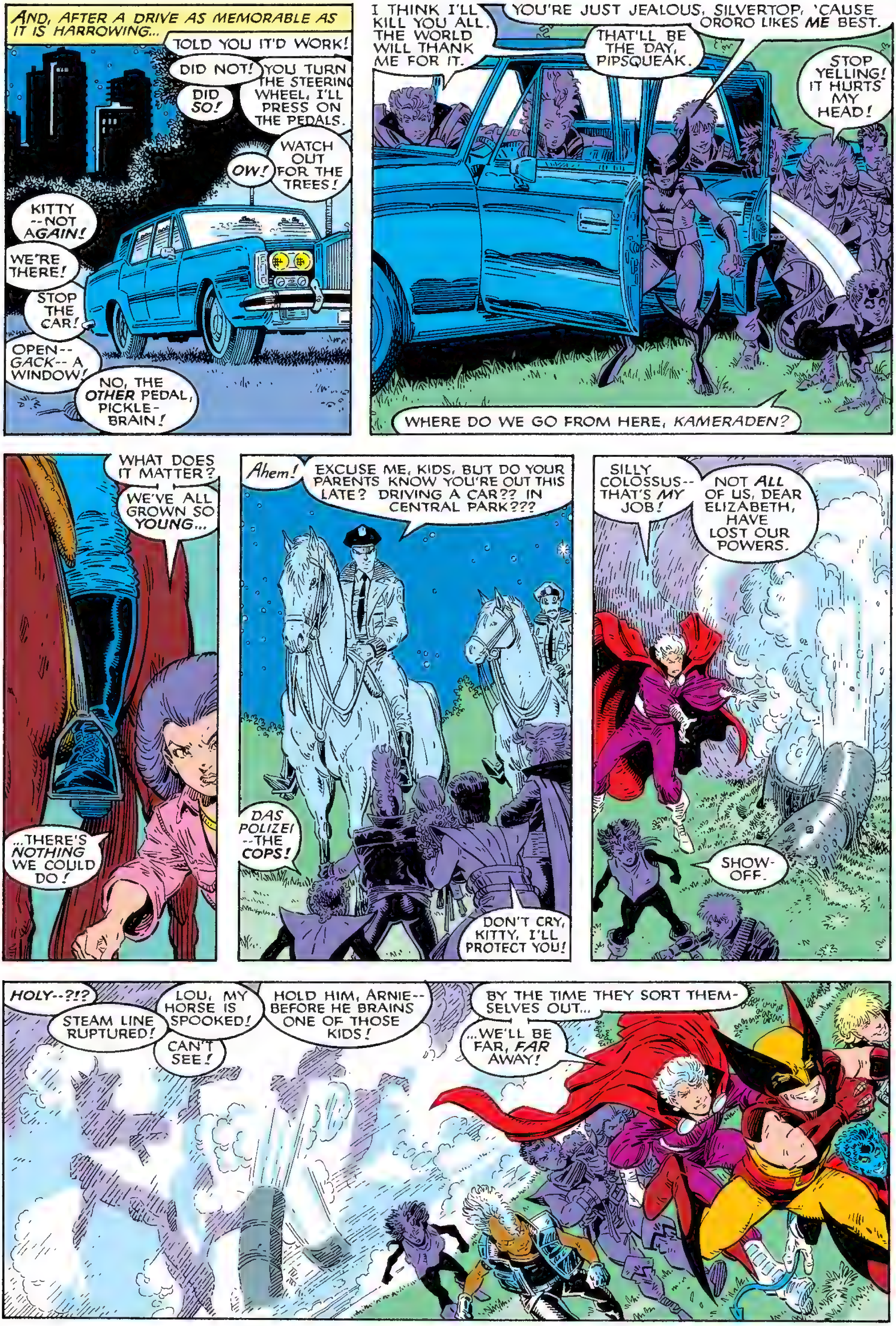

A LITTLE LATER, IN THE UNDERGROUND BRIEFING ROOM...
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY YOU *NEW MUTANTS* ARE SO UPSET.
AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE-- AS I KEEP TELLING YOU--
--ALL IS WELL!
*NOTHIN'S* CHANGED, BRATS. WE'RE THE SAME AS EVER.
THE HECK YOU ARE, WOLVERINE!
LOOK AT THESE HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS. THE SMALLER IMAGES ARE WHAT YOU ARE, THE BIG ONES WHAT YOU *SHOULD BE!*
"SOMEHOW, YOU'VE ALL BEEN REGRESSED-- ADULTS INTO TEENAGERS, WHILE THE TEENS ARE ALMOST KIDS AGAIN. AND SINCE YOU ALL SEEM COMPLETELY UNAWARE THAT ANYTHING'S HAPPENED, THE PROCESS MUST BE PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL.
"ORIGIN, UNKNOWN. PROGNOSIS, UNKNOWN. CURE...
"...UNKNOWN."
EXCUSE ME, EVERYONE!
BUT OUR MYSTERY GUEST IS AWAKE!
*BOTH TEAMS RUSH DOWN THE HALL TO THE INFIRMARY, WHERE...*
UTTER *DREAM*BOAT!
BE STILL MY HEART.
HAVE YOU A NAME?
WHAT'S A NAME?
GREAT-- EITHER AN AMNESIAC, OR A TOTAL SPACECASE.
BUT AT LEAST HE SPEAKS ENGLISH.

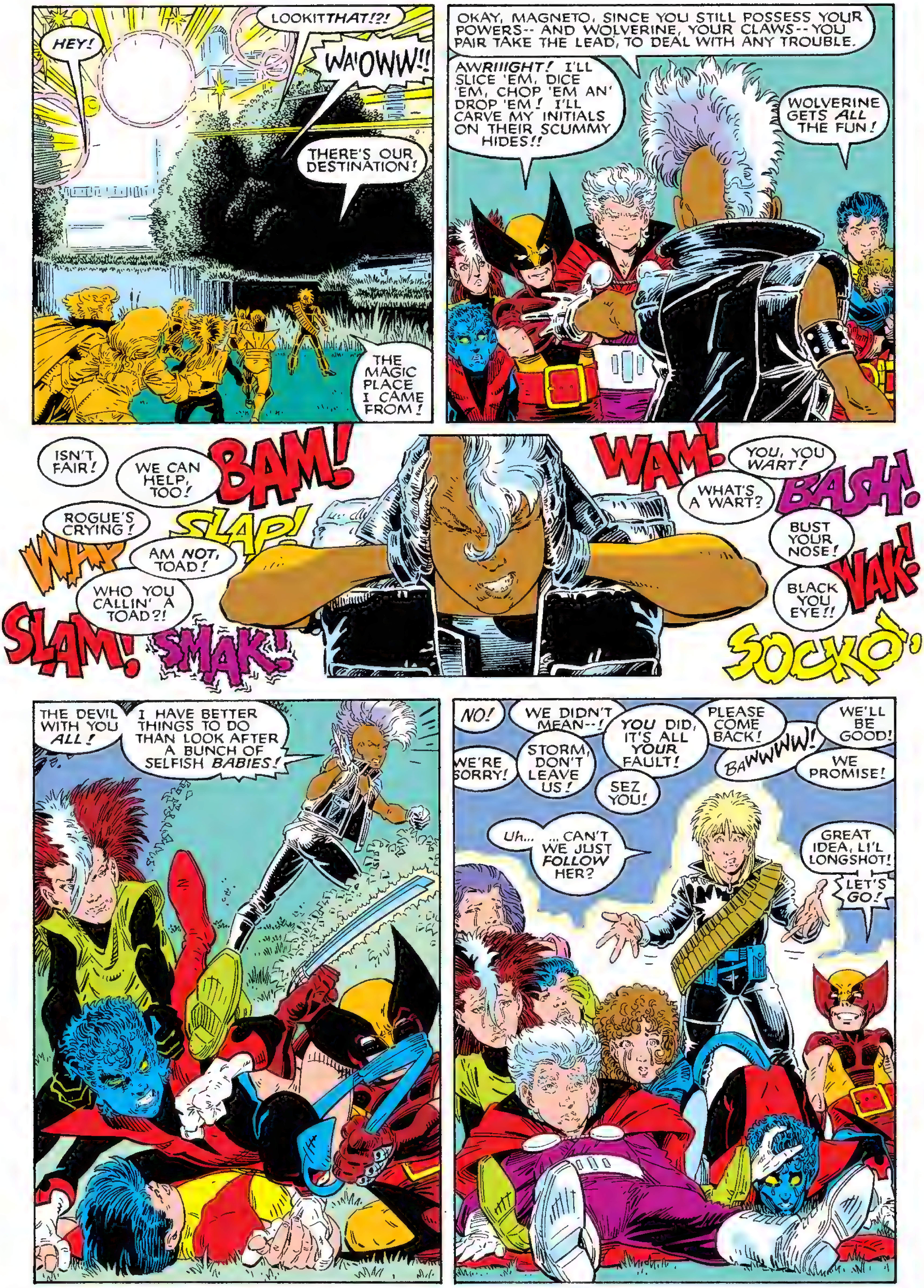

OUR *FRAULEINS* LOVE THE STRANGER.
THEY'RE *GIRLS*, ELF. DUMB BUNNIES GOT NO TASTE...
...AN' LESS BRAINS.
CIGAR SMOKE-- *YUGH!*
ALL THIS WEIRDNESS STARTED WITH THAT GUY'S ARRIVAL. BUT BOBBY AND I WERE PRESENT, TOO-- WHY WEREN'T WE AFFECTED?
C'MON, WARLOCK-- I WANT TO CHECK OUT THE DANGER ROOM.
OKAY-- BOBBY AND I WERE IN THE BOOTH, EVERYONE ELSE WAS HERE ON THE FLOOR...
...COVERED IN *ECTOPLASM!*
THAT SLIME *HAS* TO BE THE KEY!
'LOCK, SCAN FOR ANY RESIDUE!
WARLOCK? WHAT'S WRONG, PAL, WHY'RE YOU HANGING BACK?!
APPREHENSION. CONFLUENCE OF FORCES, ENERGIES, IN IMMEDIATE LOCALITY PERCEIVED AS THREAT TO SELF.
SO LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER -- THE *TEAM SUPREME*--
-- WE'RE A MATCH FOR ANYTHING!
TAKE MY HAND, WE'LL *MERGE* OUR FORMS...
*NEGATIVE!*
*BEWARE*, SELFSOULFRIENDOUG!
CONTINUED REPETITION OF *SELFMERGE* WILL INFECT YOU WITH *TRANSMODE VIRUS*. SELFSOULFRIEND WILL NO LONGER BE HUMAN...
...BUT WILL BECOME TECHNO-ORGANIC ENTITY LIKE SELF!
THE X-MEN NEED OUR HELP, WARLOCK.
IT'S *MY* CHOICE.
MY RISK.

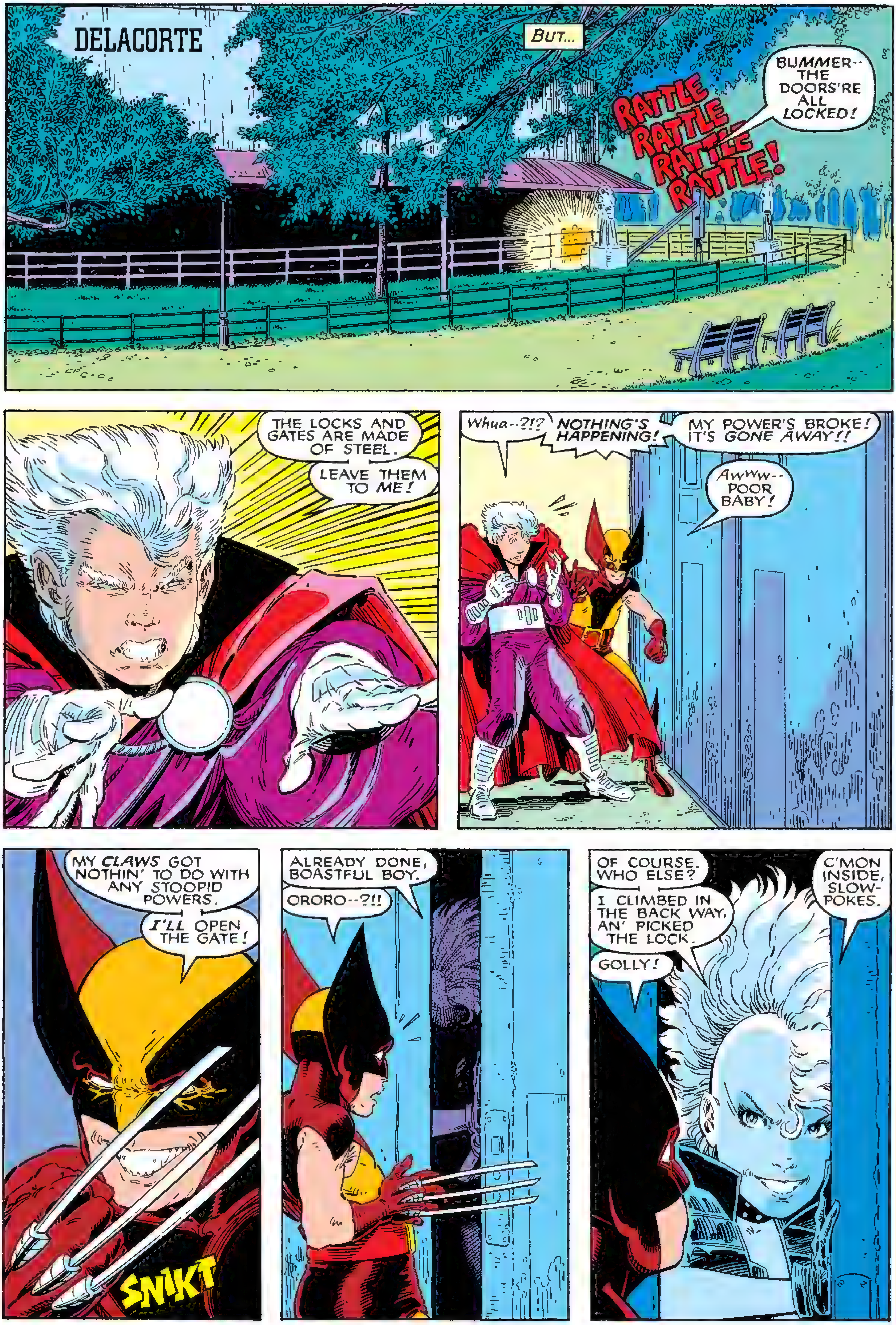

WOWIE-ZOWIE-- I DO LOVE SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH YOUR EYES!
IT'S LIKE, THE REST OF MY LIFE, I'M MOSTLY ASLEEP.
THIS IS THE ONLY TIME I'M REALLY, TRULY AWAKE!
THERE IS DANGER IN SUCH THOUGHTS.
I'M NOT SCARED.
SHOULD BE. WILL BE.
OBSERVATION: ENERGY PATTERNS ARE RESIDUE OF TECHNARCH TRANSMODE VIRUS.
DOES THAT MEAN YOUR DAD--MAGUS--IS BEHIND THIS?!
PROBABILITY MINIMAL. ORIGIN OF BASIC TECHNOLOGY IS SELF'S HOMEWORLD, BUT THE FINAL PRODUCT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY MODIFIED--ANALAGOUS TO CUSTOMIZED SOFTWARE PROGRAMMING.
SOMETHING DESIGNED THEN FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE?
LOGICAL DEDUCTION. COMPARATIVE SIMILARITY ESTABLISHED BETWEEN CURRENT ENERGY MATRICES AND THOSE RECENTLY PERCEIVED AROUND TRANSFORMED YOUTHFUL HUMANS...
...COLLOQUIAL REFERENT, BRATPACK.
OF COURSE--HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO DENSE?!
WE'VE GOT TO WARN THE OTHERS!
Meanwhile...
OUR STRANGER'S NAME IS LONGSHOT.
IT'S A LOVELY NAME!
MINE'S ROGUE, CUTIE.
X-MEN! IN HIS DEEPEST MEMORIES-- I PERCEIVE THE IMAGE...
...OF THE CREATURE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR REGRESSION...
...AND WHERE TO FIND HIM!
THEN WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR, BABE!
LET'S NAIL THE CREEP!
HOLD IT!

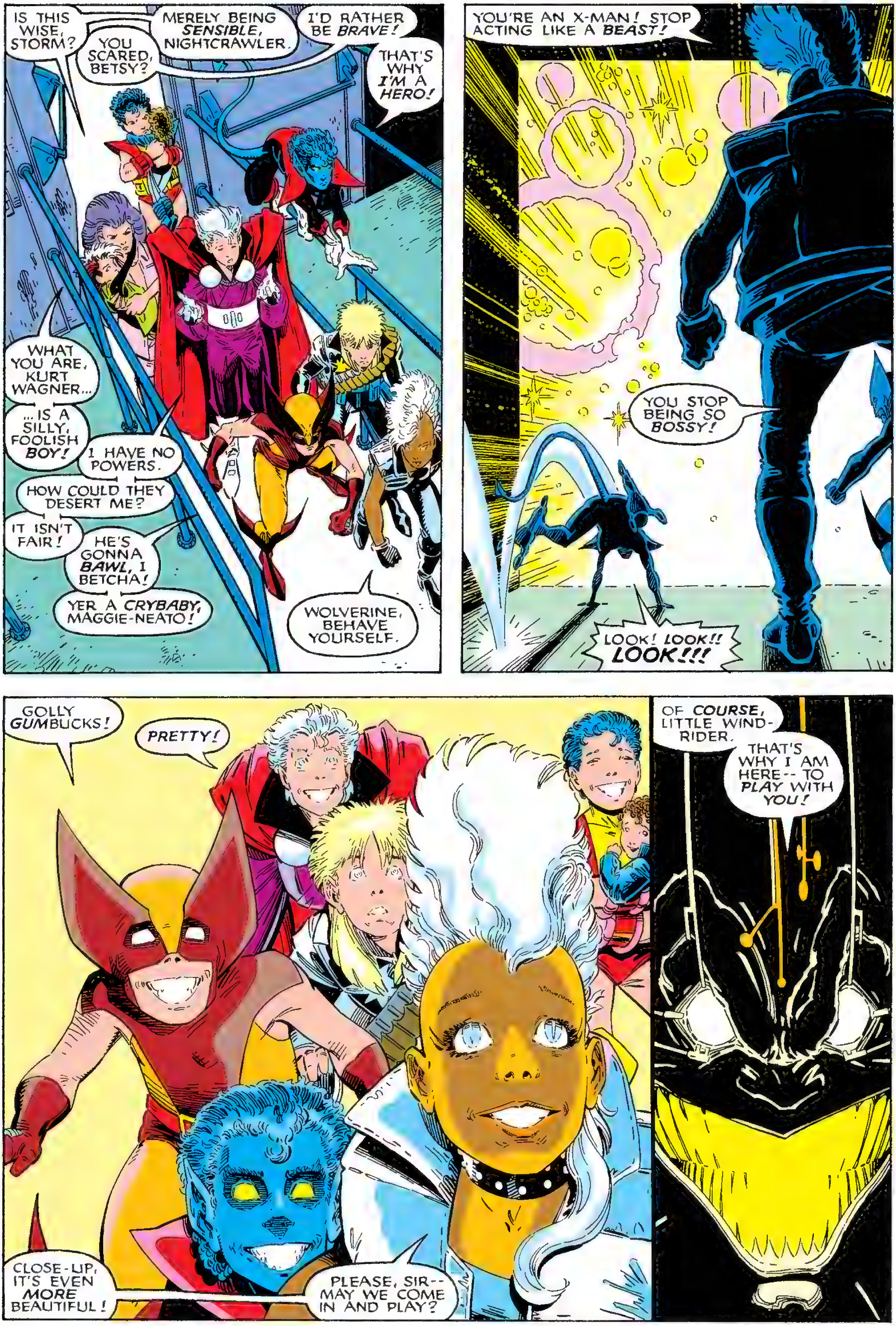


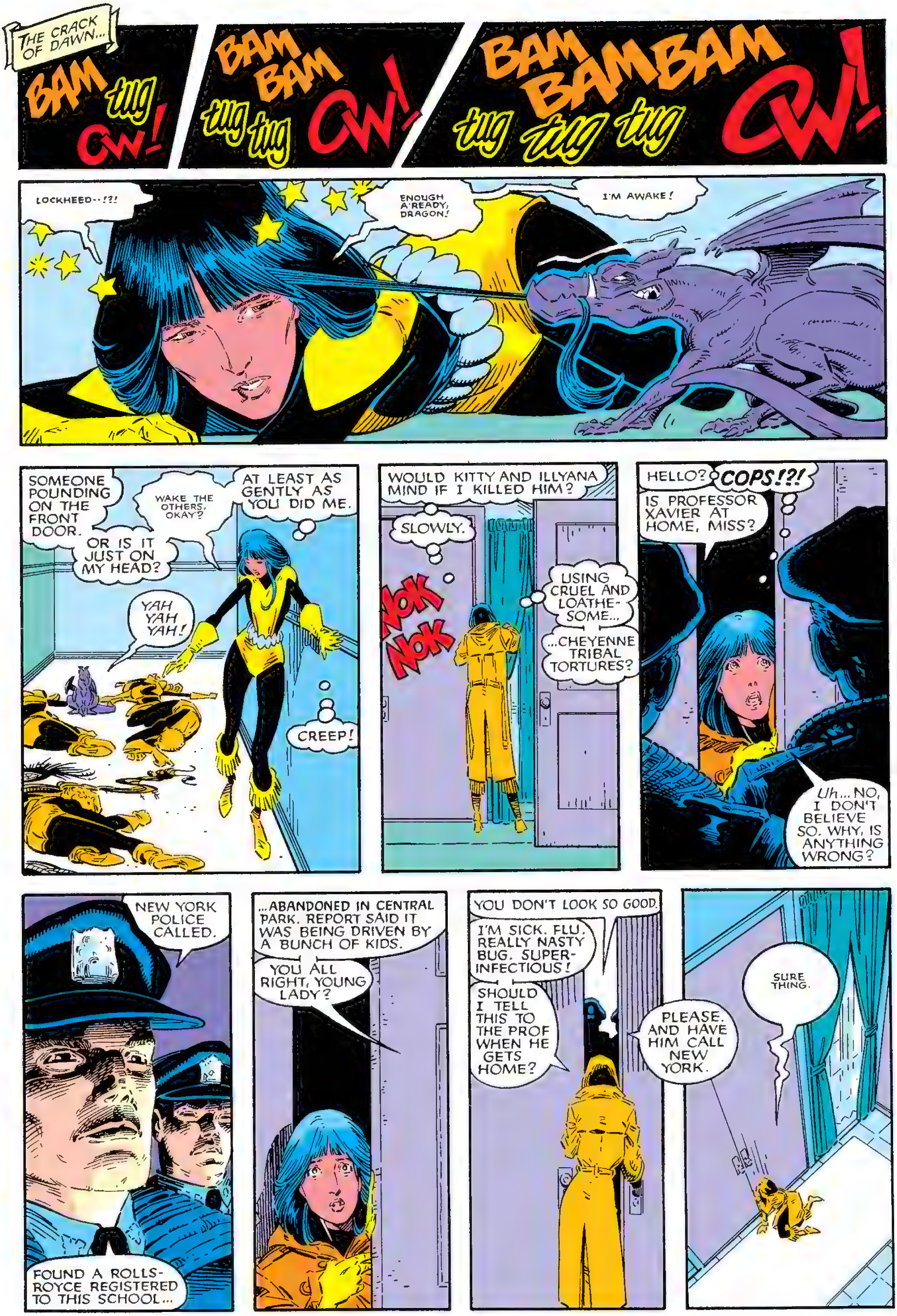
REIN IN, COWBOYS! WHERE D'YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?!
AFTER THE VILLAIN, MIRAGE!
HE AIN'T GONNA MESS WITH US AGAIN-- EVER!
THIS MAY NOT BE THE SMARTEST MOVE YOU CAN MAKE, GUYS.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW, BIMBETTE?!
STAND ASIDE--
--OR GET RUN OVER!
I DON'T TAKE THAT KIND OF TALK FROM ADULTS, WOLVERINE, MUCH LESS A PUNK-BOY MY OWN AGE.
CHILL OUT, THE LOT OF YOU!
DANI! ORORO!! WE FIGURED THINGS OUT, WE FOUND THE ANSWER!!!
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE X-MEN IS A VARIATION ON WHAT THE NEW MUTANTS WENT THROUGH WHEN YOU WERE ALL KIDNAPED...
...BY SPIRAL AND MOJO!*
Huh?!?
TSK TSK TSK--HOW FOOLISH CAN YOU BABIES BE?
*IN NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #2--Ann N.
NEVER TURN YOUR BACKS ON THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM!
ZAPOW!
BOYOBOY, WILL THEIR HEADS HURT WHEN THEY WAKE UP!
SERVES 'EM RIGHT, FOR GIVIN' US STATIC...
...THE STUPID LITTLE HAMMER-HEADS!
WE'RE THE X-MEN!
WE CAN TAKE CARE OF OUR-SELVES!
WHO DRIVES?!
I WILL!
NO, ME!
ME!
KITTY HAD AN ACCIDENT!
WAAAUGH!
STINKERROO!
WHICH WAY?
YOU'RE SO SMART, YOU FIGURE IT OUT!
ARE WE THERE YET?!

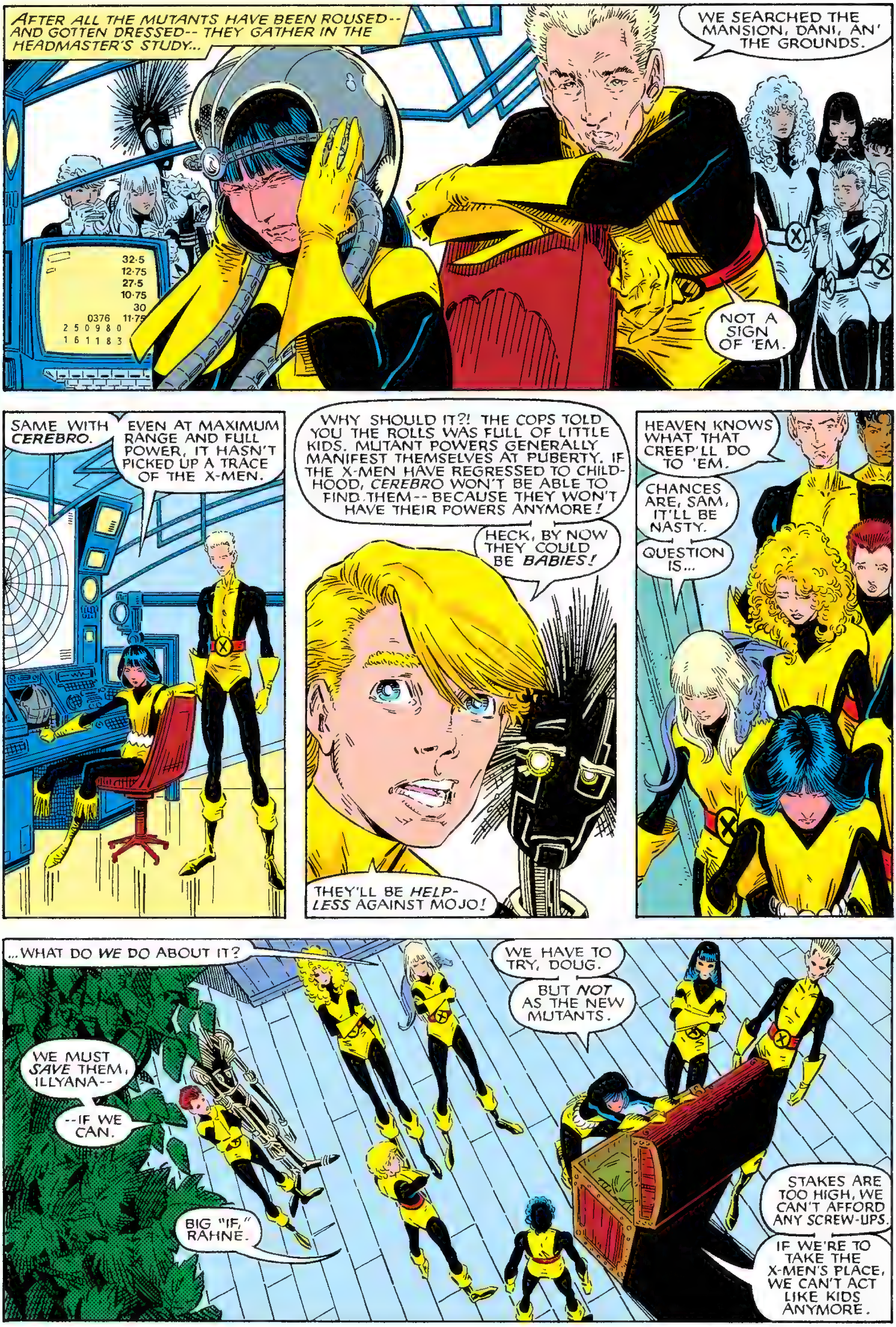

AND, AFTER A DRIVE AS MEMORABLE AS IT IS HARROWING...
TOLD YOU IT'D WORK!
DID NOT!
DID SO!
YOU TURN THE STEERING WHEEL, I'LL PRESS ON THE PEDALS.
WATCH OUT FOR THE TREES!
OW!
KITTY --NOT AGAIN!
WE'RE THERE!
STOP THE CAR!
OPEN-- GACK-- A WINDOW!
NO, THE OTHER PEDAL, PICKLE-BRAIN!
I THINK I'LL KILL YOU ALL. THE WORLD WILL THANK ME FOR IT.
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS, SILVERTOP, 'CAUSE ORORO LIKES ME BEST.
THAT'LL BE THE DAY, PIPSQUEAK.
STOP YELLING! IT HURTS MY HEAD!
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE, KAMERADEN?
WHAT DOES IT MATTER?
WE'VE ALL GROWN SO YOUNG...
...THERE'S NOTHING WE COULD DO!
Ahem!
EXCUSE ME, KIDS, BUT DO YOUR PARENTS KNOW YOU'RE OUT THIS LATE? DRIVING A CAR?? IN CENTRAL PARK???
DAS POLIZEI --THE COPS!
DON'T CRY, KITTY, I'LL PROTECT YOU!
SILLY COLOSSUS-- THAT'S MY JOB!
NOT ALL OF US, DEAR ELIZABETH, HAVE LOST OUR POWERS.
SHOW-OFF.
HOLY--?!?
STEAM LINE RUPTURED!
LOU, MY HORSE IS SPOOKED!
CAN'T SEE!
HOLD HIM, ARNIE-- BEFORE HE BRAINS ONE OF THOSE KIDS!
BY THE TIME THEY SORT THEMSELVES OUT...
...WE'LL BE FAR, FAR AWAY!

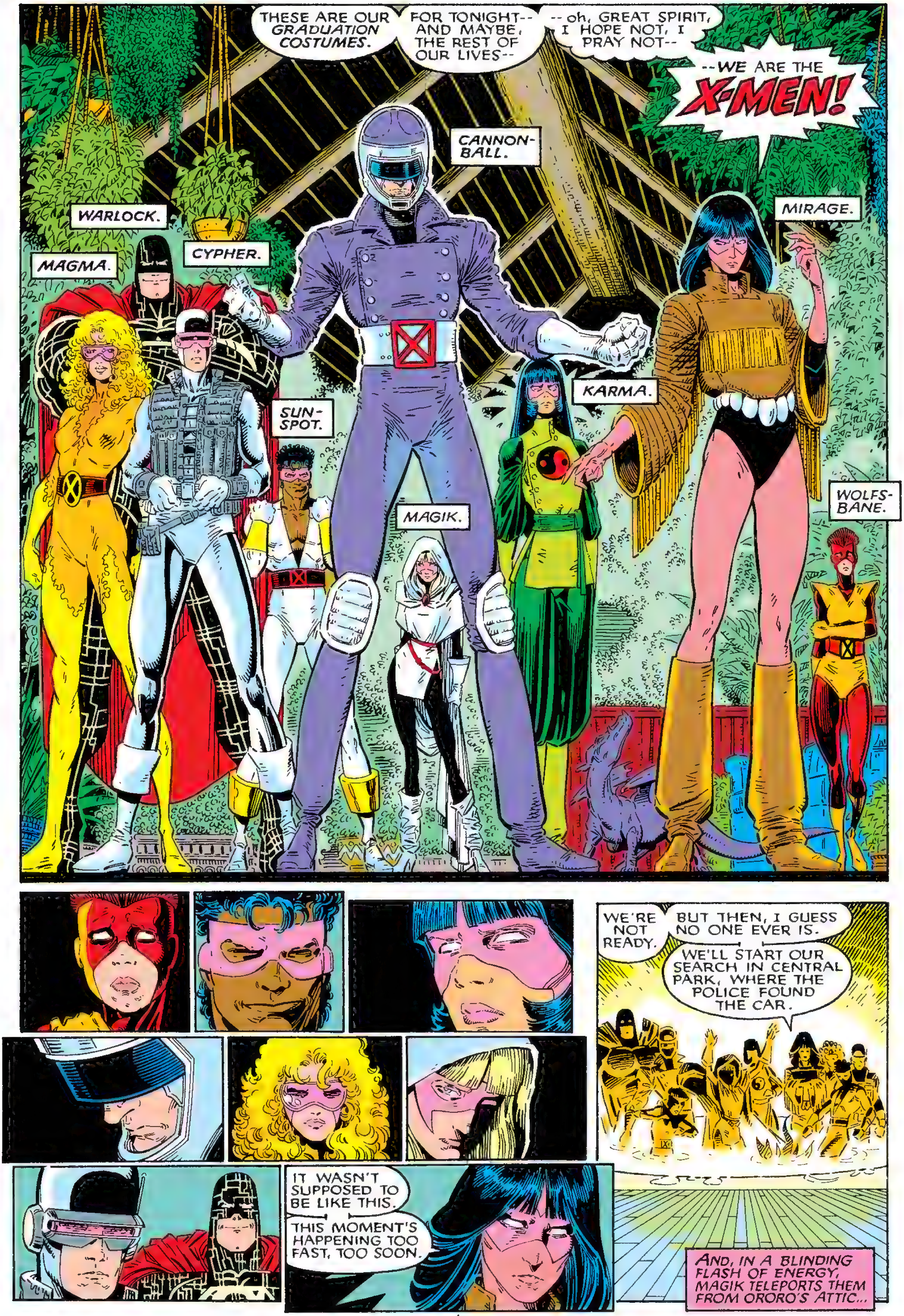

HEY!
LOOKITTHAT!?!
WA'OWW!!
THERE'S OUR DESTINATION!
THE MAGIC PLACE I CAME FROM!
OKAY, MAGNETO, SINCE YOU STILL POSSESS YOUR POWERS-- AND WOLVERINE, YOUR CLAWS-- YOU PAIR TAKE THE LEAD, TO DEAL WITH ANY TROUBLE.
AWRIIIGHT! I'LL SLICE 'EM, DICE 'EM, CHOP 'EM AN' DROP 'EM! I'LL CARVE MY INITIALS ON THEIR SCUMMY HIDES!!
WOLVERINE GETS ALL THE FUN!
ISN'T FAIR!
WE CAN HELP, TOO!
BAM!
WAM!
YOU, YOU WART!
WHAT'S A WART?
BASH!
ROGUE'S CRYING!
SLAP!
WAP
AM NOT, TOAD!
WHO YOU CALLIN' A TOAD?!
BUST YOUR NOSE!
BLACK YOU EYE!!
VAK!
SLAM!
SMAK!
SOCKO!
THE DEVIL WITH YOU ALL!
I HAVE BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN LOOK AFTER A BUNCH OF SELFISH BABIES!
NO!
WE DIDN'T MEAN--!
YOU DID, IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
PLEASE COME BACK!
WE'LL BE GOOD!
WE'RE SORRY!
STORM, DON'T LEAVE US!
SEZ YOU!
BAWWWW!
WE PROMISE!
Uh...
...CAN'T WE JUST FOLLOW HER?
GREAT IDEA, LI'L LONGSHOT!
LET'S GO!

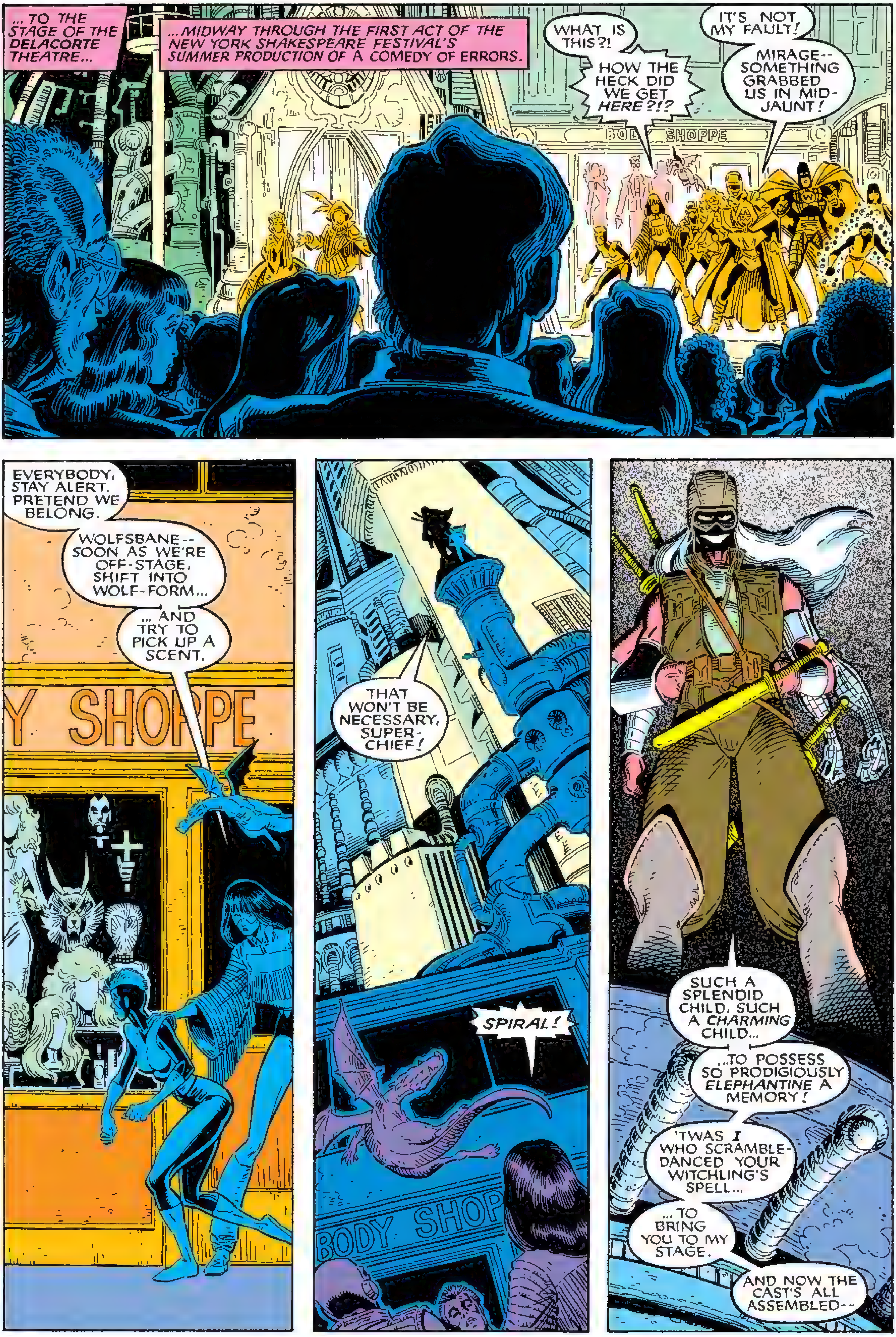

DELACORTE
BUT...
RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE!
BUMMER-- THE DOORS'RE ALL LOCKED!
THE LOCKS AND GATES ARE MADE OF STEEL.
LEAVE THEM TO ME!
Whua--?!?
NOTHING'S HAPPENING!
MY POWER'S BROKE! IT'S GONE AWAY!!
Awww-- POOR BABY!
MY CLAWS GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH ANY STOOPID POWERS.
I'LL OPEN THE GATE!
SNIKT
ALREADY DONE, BOASTFUL BOY.
ORORO--?!!
OF COURSE. WHO ELSE?
I CLIMBED IN THE BACK WAY, AN' PICKED THE LOCK.
GOLLY!
C'MON INSIDE, SLOW-POKES.

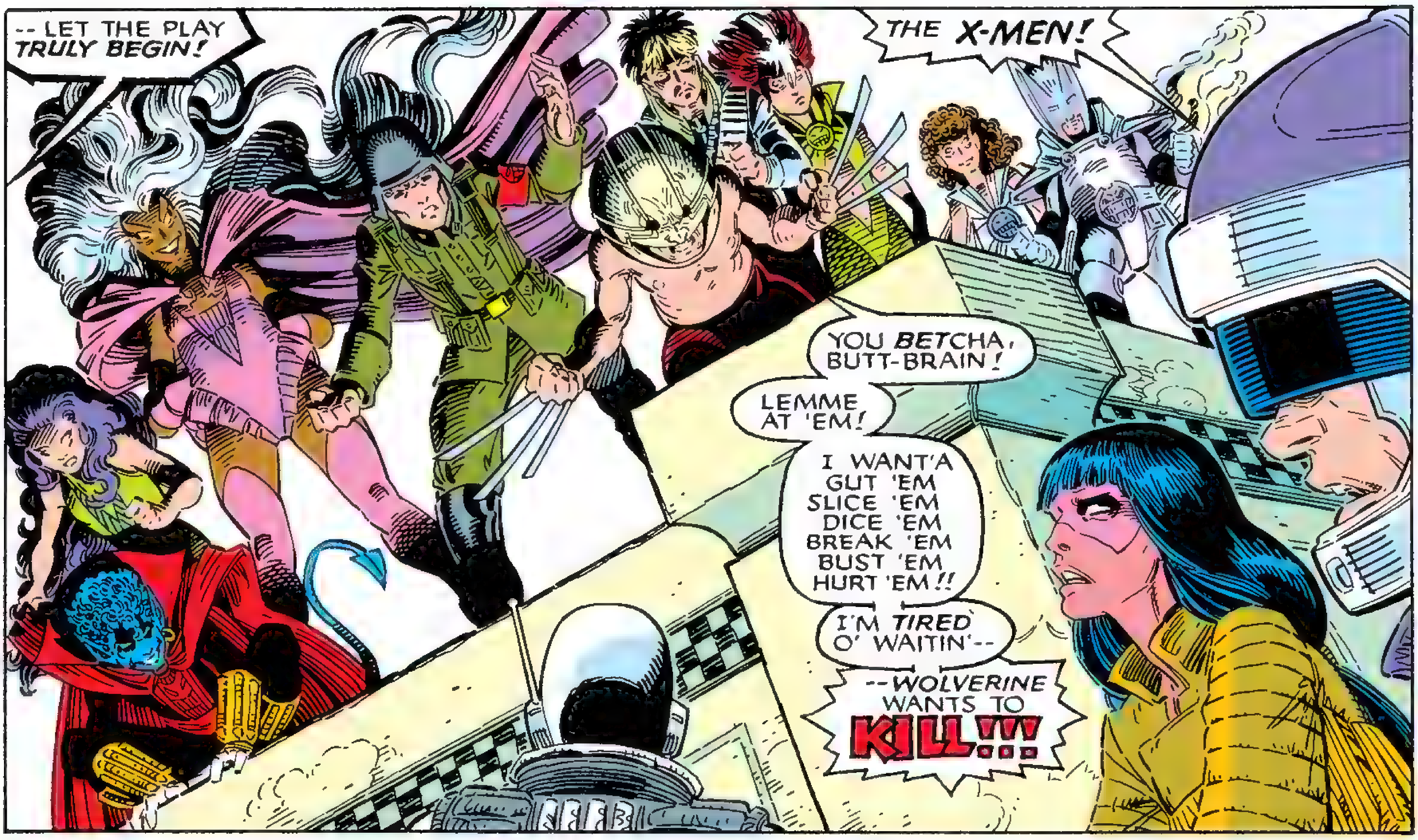

IS THIS WISE, STORM?
YOU SCARED, BETSY?
MERELY BEING *SENSIBLE*, NIGHTCRAWLER.
I'D RATHER BE *BRAVE!*
THAT'S WHY *I'M* A *HERO!*
WHAT YOU ARE, KURT WAGNER...
...IS A SILLY, FOOLISH *BOY!*
I HAVE NO POWERS.
HOW COULD THEY DESERT ME?
IT ISN'T FAIR!
HE'S GONNA *BAWL*, I BETCHA!
YER A *CRYBABY*, MAGGIE-NEATO!
WOLVERINE, BEHAVE YOURSELF.
YOU'RE AN X-MAN*!* STOP ACTING LIKE A *BEAST!*
YOU STOP BEING SO *BOSSY!*
LOOK! *LOOK!!* **LOOK!!!**
GOLLY *GUM*BUCKS!
*PRETTY!*
CLOSE-UP, IT'S EVEN *MORE* BEAUTIFUL!
PLEASE, SIR-- MAY WE COME IN AND PLAY?
OF *COURSE*, LITTLE WIND-RIDER.
THAT'S WHY I AM HERE-- TO *PLAY* WITH *YOU!*

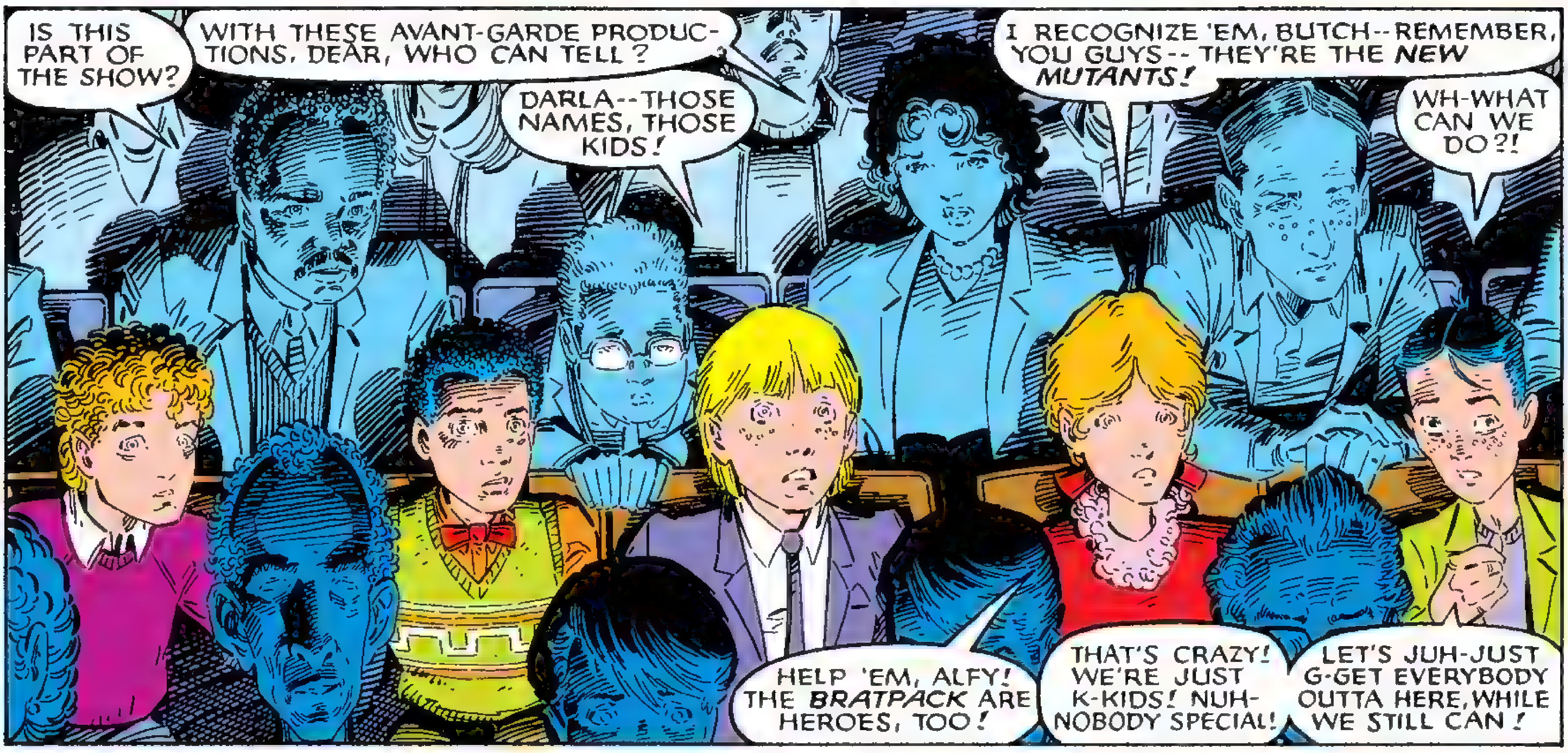

THE CRACK OF DAWN...
BAM tug OW!
BAM BAM tug tug OW!
BAM BAMBAM tug tug tug OW!
LOCKHEED--!?!
ENOUGH A'READY, DRAGON!
I'M AWAKE!
SOMEONE POUNDING ON THE FRONT DOOR.
OR IS IT JUST ON MY HEAD?
WAKE THE OTHERS, OKAY?
AT LEAST AS GENTLY AS YOU DID ME.
YAH YAH YAH!
CREEP!
WOULD KITTY AND ILLYANA MIND IF I KILLED HIM?
SLOWLY.
NOK NOK
USING CRUEL AND LOATHESOME...
...CHEYENNE TRIBAL TORTURES?
HELLO?
COPS!?!
IS PROFESSOR XAVIER AT HOME, MISS?
Uh... NO, I DON'T BELIEVE SO. WHY, IS ANYTHING WRONG?
NEW YORK POLICE CALLED.
FOUND A ROLLS-ROYCE REGISTERED TO THIS SCHOOL...
...ABANDONED IN CENTRAL PARK. REPORT SAID IT WAS BEING DRIVEN BY A BUNCH OF KIDS.
YOU ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LADY?
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.
I'M SICK. FLU. REALLY NASTY BUG. SUPER-INFECTIOUS!
SHOULD I TELL THIS TO THE PROF WHEN HE GETS HOME?
PLEASE. AND HAVE HIM CALL NEW YORK.
SURE THING.

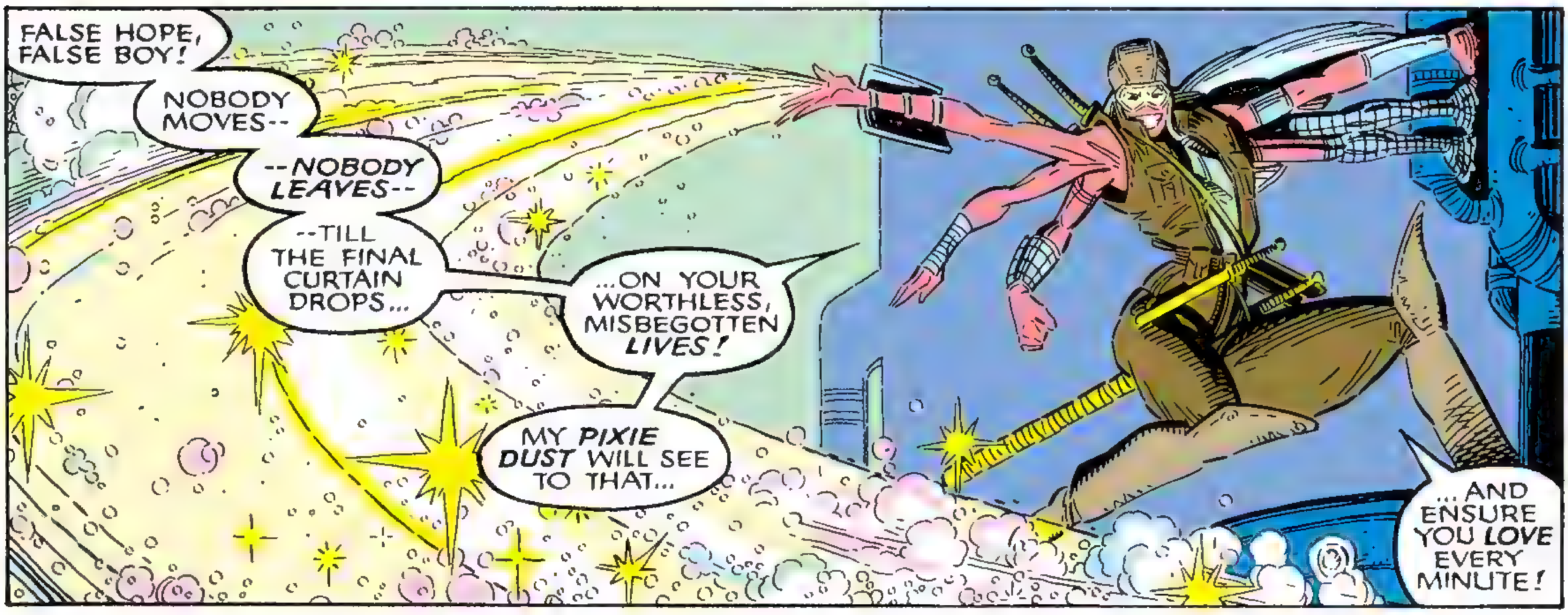

AFTER ALL THE MUTANTS HAVE BEEN ROUSED-- AND GOTTEN DRESSED-- THEY GATHER IN THE HEADMASTER'S STUDY...
WE SEARCHED THE MANSION, DANI, AN' THE GROUNDS.
32·5
12·75
27·5
10·75
30
0376 11·75
2 5 0 9 8 0
1 6 1 1 8 3
NOT A SIGN OF 'EM.
SAME WITH *CEREBRO*.
EVEN AT MAXIMUM RANGE AND FULL POWER, IT HASN'T PICKED UP A TRACE OF THE X-MEN.
WHY SHOULD IT?! THE COPS TOLD YOU THE ROLLS WAS FULL OF LITTLE KIDS. MUTANT POWERS GENERALLY MANIFEST THEMSELVES AT PUBERTY. IF THE X-MEN HAVE REGRESSED TO CHILDHOOD, *CEREBRO* WON'T BE ABLE TO FIND THEM-- BECAUSE THEY WON'T HAVE THEIR POWERS ANYMORE!
HECK, BY NOW THEY COULD BE *BABIES!*
THEY'LL BE *HELPLESS* AGAINST MOJO!
HEAVEN KNOWS WHAT THAT CREEP'LL DO TO 'EM.
CHANCES ARE, SAM, IT'LL BE NASTY.
QUESTION IS...
...WHAT DO *WE* DO ABOUT IT?
WE HAVE TO TRY, DOUG.
BUT *NOT* AS THE NEW MUTANTS.
WE MUST *SAVE* THEM, ILLYANA--
--IF WE CAN.
BIG "IF," RAHNE.
STAKES ARE TOO HIGH, WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY *SCREW-UPS*.
IF WE'RE TO TAKE THE X-MEN'S PLACE, WE CAN'T ACT LIKE KIDS ANYMORE.


THESE ARE OUR *GRADUATION COSTUMES*.
FOR TONIGHT-- AND MAYBE, THE REST OF OUR LIVES--
--oh, GREAT SPIRIT, I HOPE NOT, I PRAY NOT--
--WE ARE THE X-MEN!
CANNONBALL.
WARLOCK.
MAGMA.
CYPHER.
MIRAGE.
SUNSPOT.
KARMA.
MAGIK.
WOLFSBANE.
WE'RE NOT READY.
BUT THEN, I GUESS NO ONE EVER IS.
WE'LL START OUR SEARCH IN CENTRAL PARK, WHERE THE POLICE FOUND THE CAR.
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THIS.
THIS MOMENT'S HAPPENING TOO FAST, TOO SOON.
AND, IN A BLINDING FLASH OF ENERGY, MAGIK TELEPORTS THEM FROM ORORO'S ATTIC...

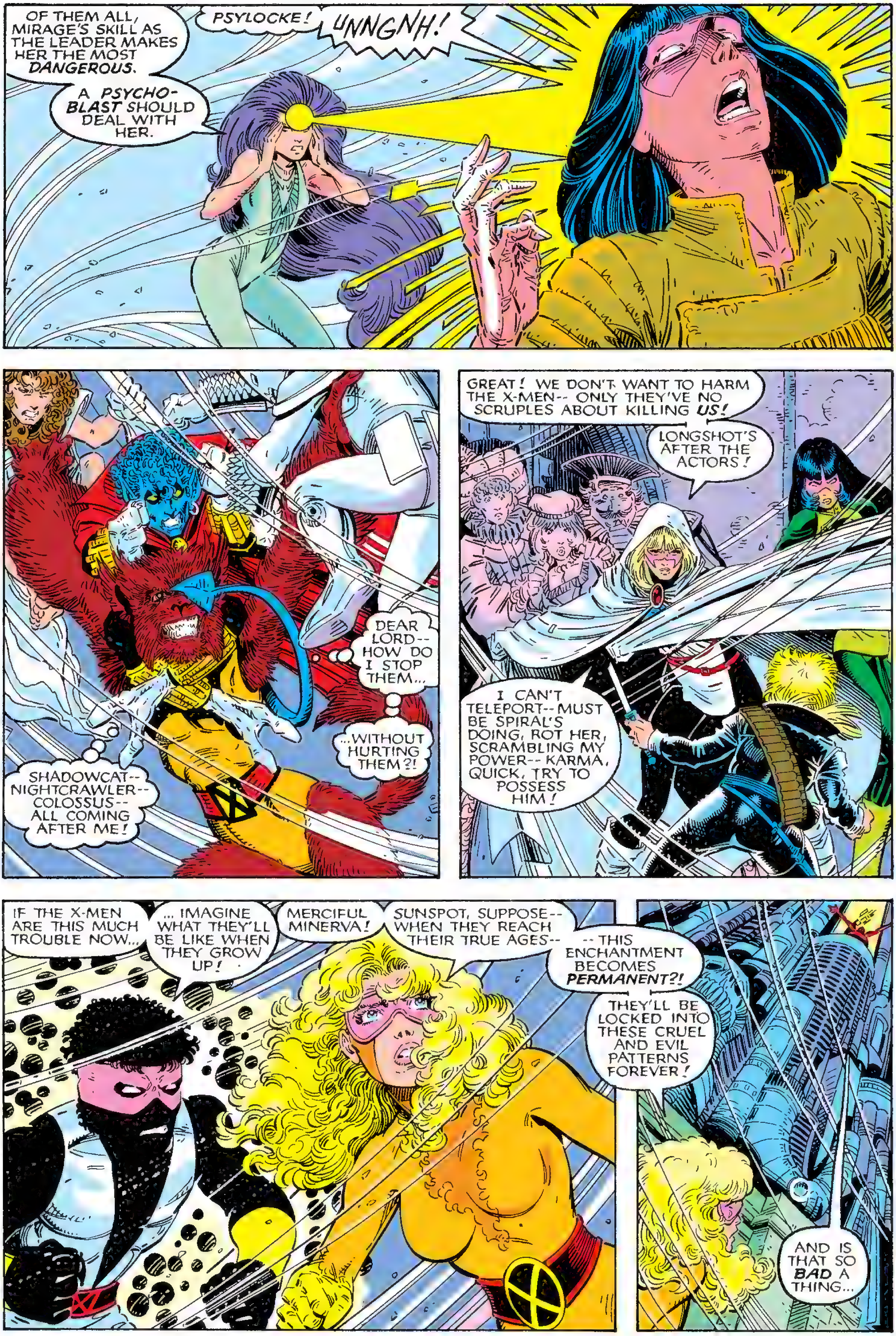

...TO THE STAGE OF THE DELACORTE THEATRE...
...MIDWAY THROUGH THE FIRST ACT OF THE NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S SUMMER PRODUCTION OF A COMEDY OF ERRORS.
WHAT IS THIS?!
HOW THE HECK DID WE GET HERE?!?
IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
MIRAGE-- SOMETHING GRABBED US IN MID-JAUNT!
BODY SHOPPE
EVERYBODY, STAY ALERT. PRETEND WE BELONG.
WOLFSBANE-- SOON AS WE'RE OFF-STAGE, SHIFT INTO WOLF-FORM...
...AND TRY TO PICK UP A SCENT.
Y SHOPPE
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, SUPER-CHIEF!
SPIRAL!
BODY SHOP
SUCH A SPLENDID CHILD, SUCH A CHARMING CHILD...
...TO POSSESS SO PRODIGIOUSLY ELEPHANTINE A MEMORY!
'TWAS I WHO SCRAMBLE-DANCED YOUR WITCHLING'S SPELL...
...TO BRING YOU TO MY STAGE.
AND NOW THE CAST'S ALL ASSEMBLED--

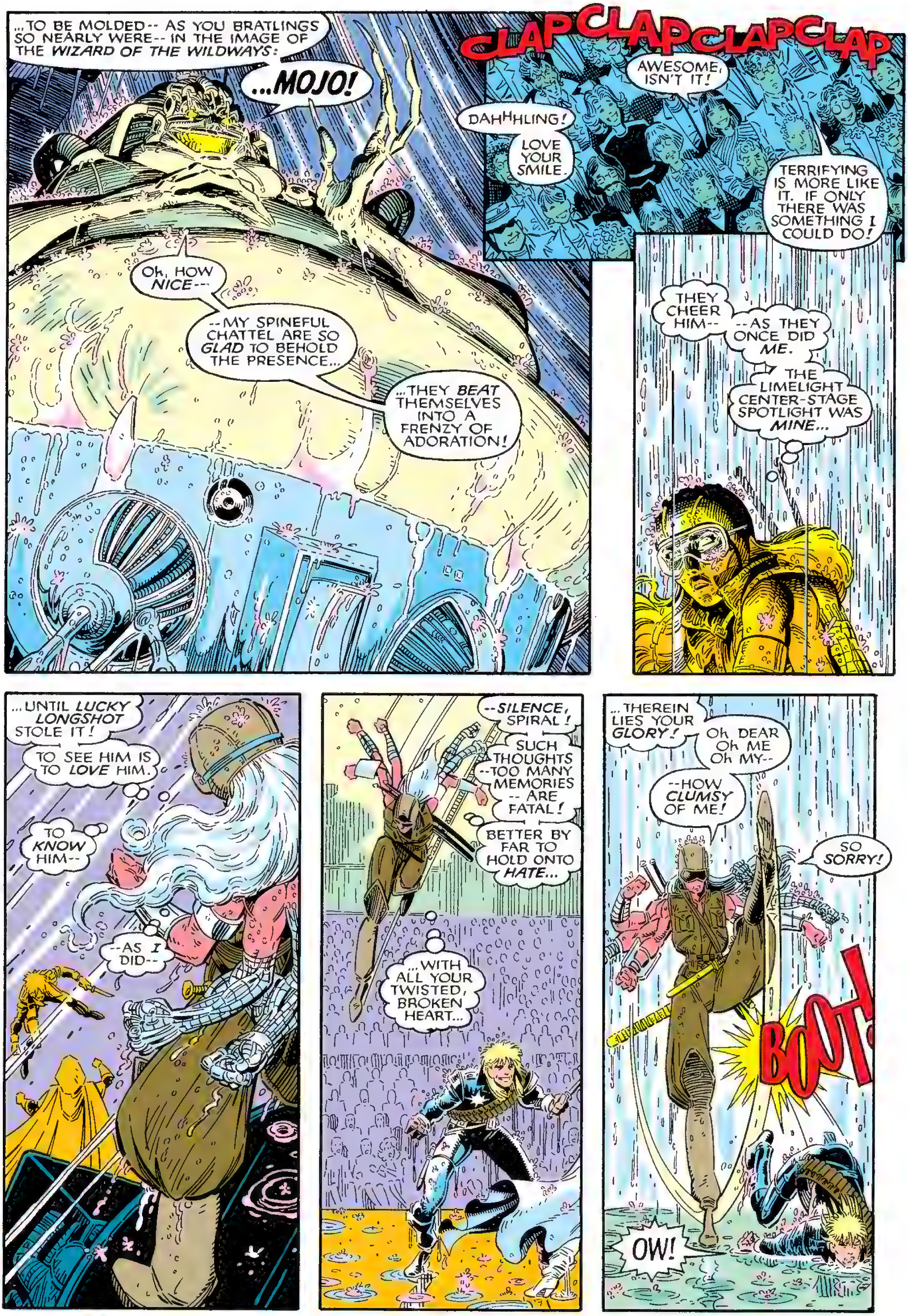

-- LET THE PLAY *TRULY BEGIN!*
THE *X-MEN!*
YOU *BETCHA,* BUTT-BRAIN!
LEMME AT 'EM!
I WANT'A GUT 'EM SLICE 'EM DICE 'EM BREAK 'EM BUST 'EM HURT 'EM!!
I'M *TIRED* O' WAITIN'--
*--WOLVERINE* WANTS TO KILL!!!

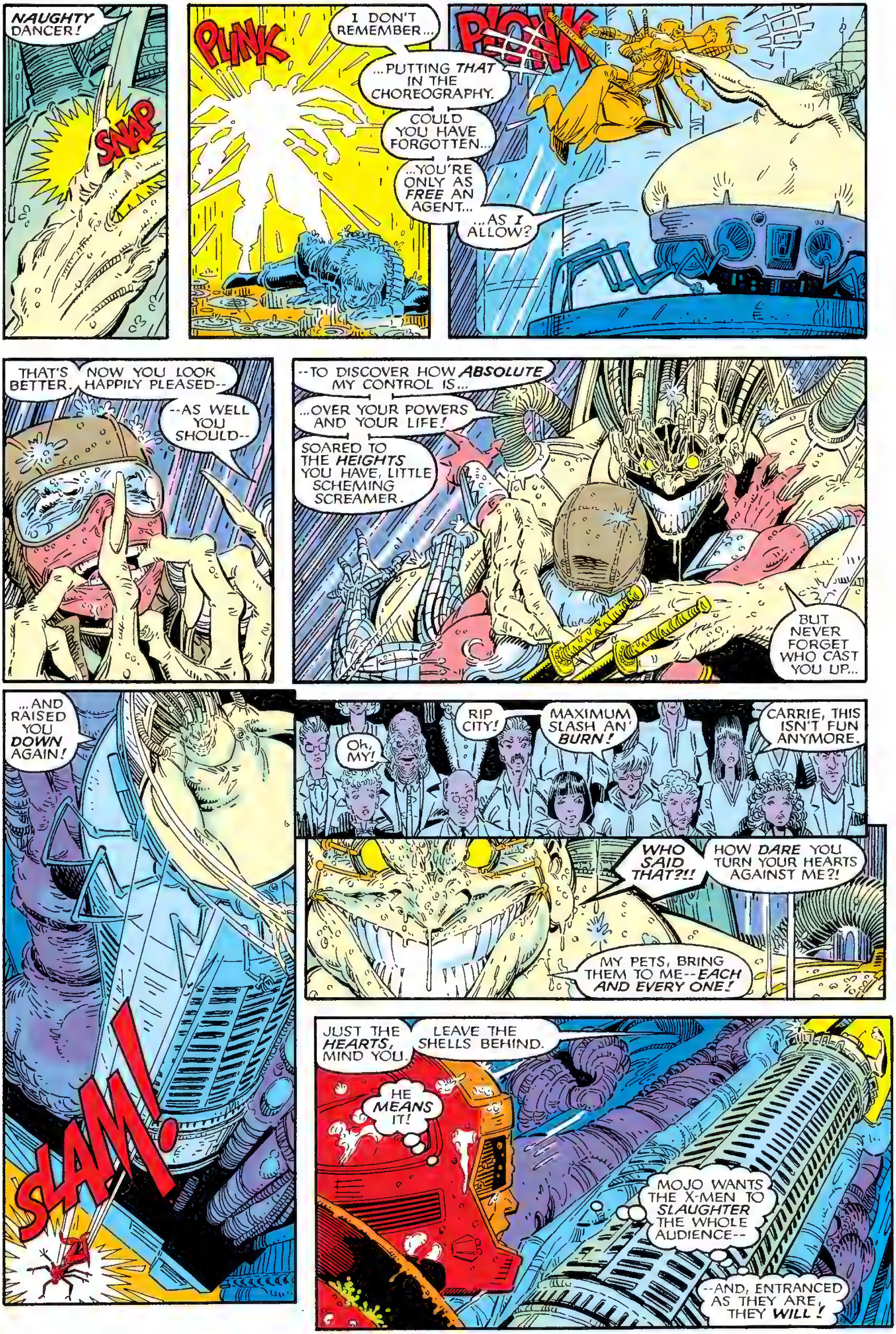

IS THIS PART OF THE SHOW?
WITH THESE AVANT-GARDE PRODUCTIONS, DEAR, WHO CAN TELL?
DARLA--THOSE NAMES, THOSE KIDS!
I RECOGNIZE 'EM, BUTCH--REMEMBER, YOU GUYS--THEY'RE THE *NEW MUTANTS!*
WH-WHAT CAN WE DO?!
HELP 'EM, ALFY! THE *BRATPACK* ARE HEROES, TOO!
THAT'S CRAZY! WE'RE JUST K-KIDS! NUH-NOBODY SPECIAL!
LET'S JUH-JUST G-GET EVERYBODY OUTTA HERE, WHILE WE STILL CAN!


FALSE HOPE, FALSE BOY!
NOBODY MOVES--
*--NOBODY LEAVES--*
--TILL THE FINAL CURTAIN DROPS...
...ON YOUR WORTHLESS, MISBEGOTTEN *LIVES!*
MY *PIXIE DUST* WILL SEE TO THAT...
...AND ENSURE YOU *LOVE* EVERY MINUTE!

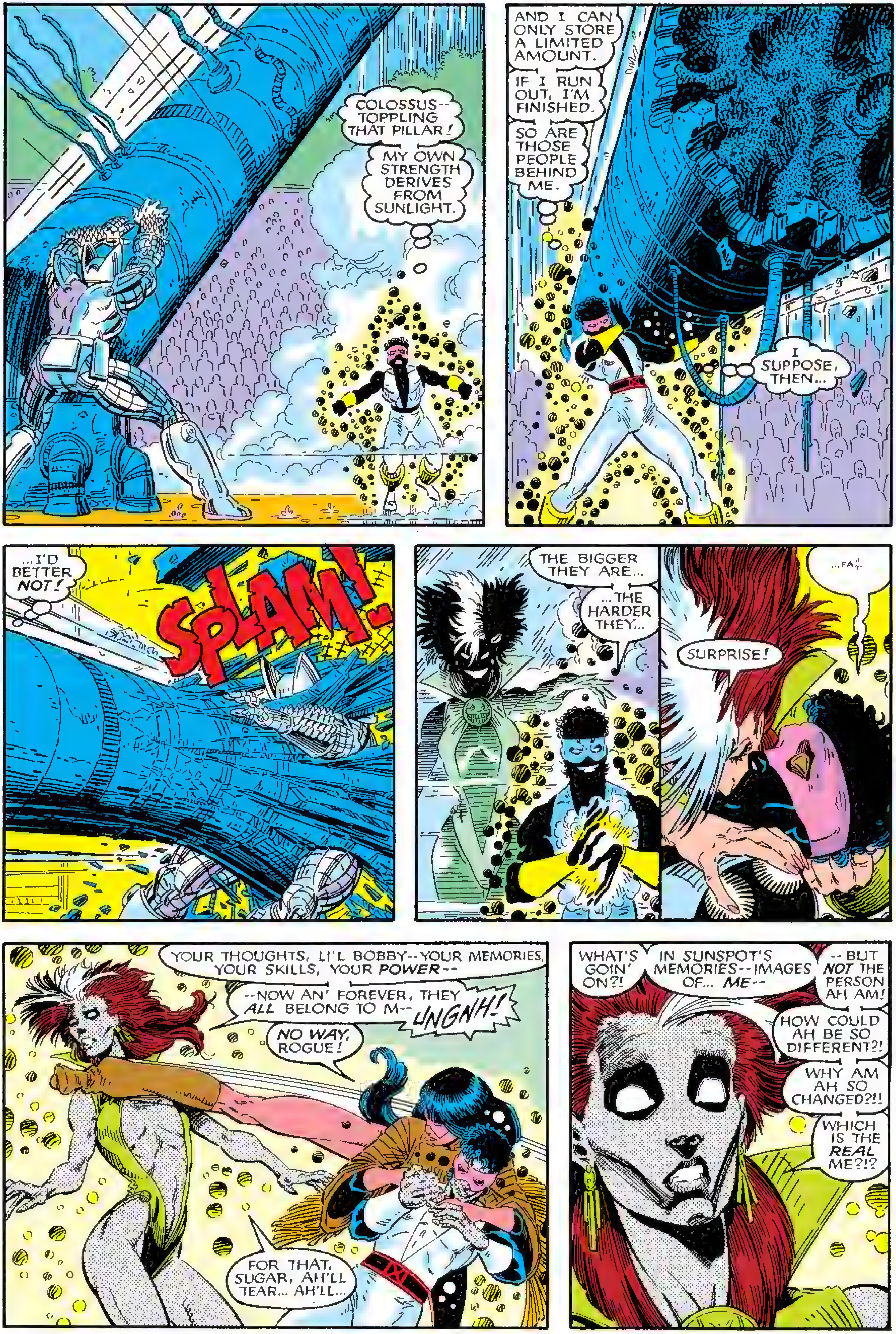
WALTER, DO YOU HEAR CROAKING?
BE REAL, WEEZIE.
YOU THINK FROGS GO TO THE THEATER?
HEY, UNCLE PUDDLEGULP, IS SOMETHIN' BAD HAPPENIN'!?*
I DUNNO, KIDS. BUT BE READY TO PROTECT YOUR MOM...
...QUEEN GREENSONG, JUST IN CASE!
*SPOKEN IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE BEASTS, COMPREHENSIBLE TO THOSE WITH EARS TO HEAR -- AnnN.
OBSERVATION: AT CURRENT AGES, SELFOE X-MEN LACK ENHANCED MUTANT ABILITIES.
SELFRIENDS CAN SUBDUE THEM WITH COMPARATIVE EASE.
Oh, YEAH, WARLOCK?! TRY TELLING THEM THAT!
BOF!
CRETINOUS CLODS-- WE'RE GETTING OLDER BY THE MINUTE!
AND MORE WICKED AS WELL!
ALREADY, WE OLDEST HAVE REGAINED OUR POWERS!
WAIT'LL WE ALL DO!
YOU BRATS'LL BE DOG-MEAT!
ALARM! SELF'S TECHNO-ORGANIC NATURE...
...MAKES YOU ESPECIALLY SUSCEPTIBLE...
...TO MAGNETO'S TOTAL AND ABSOLUTE CONTROL...
...OVER THE FORCES OF MAGNETISM!
YIKOW!


OF THEM ALL, MIRAGE'S SKILL AS THE LEADER MAKES HER THE MOST *DANGEROUS*.
A *PSYCHO-BLAST* SHOULD DEAL WITH HER.
PSYLOCKE!
UNNGNH!
DEAR LORD-- HOW DO I STOP THEM...
...WITHOUT HURTING THEM?!
SHADOWCAT-- NIGHTCRAWLER-- COLOSSUS-- ALL COMING AFTER ME!
GREAT! WE DON'T WANT TO HARM THE X-MEN-- ONLY THEY'VE NO SCRUPLES ABOUT KILLING *US!*
LONGSHOT'S AFTER THE ACTORS!
I CAN'T TELEPORT-- MUST BE SPIRAL'S DOING, ROT HER, SCRAMBLING MY POWER-- KARMA, QUICK, TRY TO POSSESS HIM!
IF THE X-MEN ARE THIS MUCH TROUBLE NOW...
... IMAGINE WHAT THEY'LL BE LIKE WHEN THEY GROW UP!
MERCIFUL MINERVA!
SUNSPOT, SUPPOSE-- WHEN THEY REACH THEIR TRUE AGES--
-- THIS ENCHANTMENT BECOMES *PERMANENT?!*
THEY'LL BE LOCKED INTO THESE CRUEL AND EVIL PATTERNS FOREVER!
AND IS THAT SO *BAD* A THING...

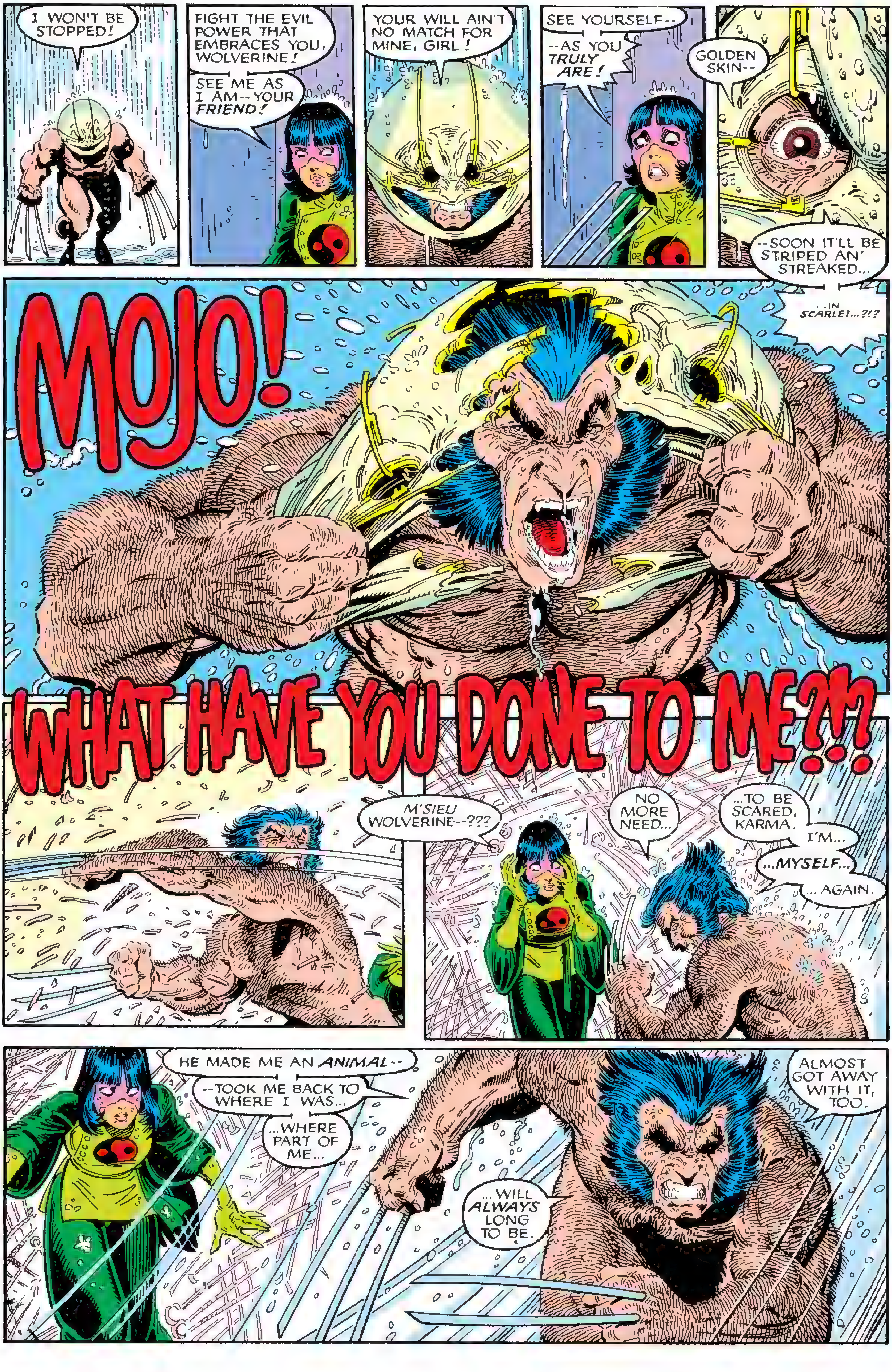

...TO BE MOLDED-- AS YOU BRATLINGS SO NEARLY WERE-- IN THE IMAGE OF THE *WIZARD OF THE WILDWAYS:*
...MOJO!
Oh, HOW *NICE*---
--MY SPINEFUL CHATTEL ARE SO *GLAD* TO BEHOLD THE PRESENCE...
...THEY *BEAT* THEMSELVES INTO A FRENZY OF ADORATION!
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
AWESOME, ISN'T IT!
DAHHHLING!
LOVE YOUR SMILE.
TERRIFYING IS MORE LIKE IT. IF ONLY THERE WAS SOMETHING *I* COULD DO!
THEY CHEER HIM--
--AS THEY ONCE DID *ME*.
THE LIMELIGHT CENTER-STAGE SPOTLIGHT WAS *MINE*...
...UNTIL *LUCKY LONGSHOT* STOLE IT!
TO SEE HIM IS TO *LOVE* HIM.
TO *KNOW* HIM--
--AS *I* DID--
--*SILENCE, SPIRAL!*
SUCH THOUGHTS --TOO MANY MEMORIES -- ARE FATAL!
BETTER BY FAR TO HOLD ONTO *HATE*...
...WITH ALL YOUR TWISTED, BROKEN HEART...
...THEREIN LIES YOUR *GLORY!*
Oh DEAR Oh ME Oh MY--
--HOW *CLUMSY* OF ME!
SO *SORRY!*
BOOT!
OW!


NAUGHTY DANCER!
SNAP
PLINK
I DON'T REMEMBER...
...PUTTING THAT IN THE CHOREOGRAPHY.
COULD YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN...
...YOU'RE ONLY AS FREE AN AGENT...
...AS I ALLOW?
PLONK
THAT'S BETTER.
NOW YOU LOOK HAPPILY PLEASED--
--AS WELL YOU SHOULD--
--TO DISCOVER HOW ABSOLUTE MY CONTROL IS...
...OVER YOUR POWERS AND YOUR LIFE!
SOARED TO THE HEIGHTS YOU HAVE, LITTLE SCHEMING SCREAMER.
BUT NEVER FORGET WHO CAST YOU UP...
...AND RAISED YOU DOWN AGAIN!
SLAM!
Oh, MY!
RIP CITY!
MAXIMUM SLASH AN' BURN!
CARRIE, THIS ISN'T FUN ANYMORE.
WHO SAID THAT?!!
HOW DARE YOU TURN YOUR HEARTS AGAINST ME?!
MY PETS, BRING THEM TO ME--EACH AND EVERY ONE!
JUST THE HEARTS, MIND YOU.
LEAVE THE SHELLS BEHIND.
HE MEANS IT!
MOJO WANTS THE X-MEN TO SLAUGHTER THE WHOLE AUDIENCE--
--AND, ENTRANCED AS THEY ARE, THEY WILL!

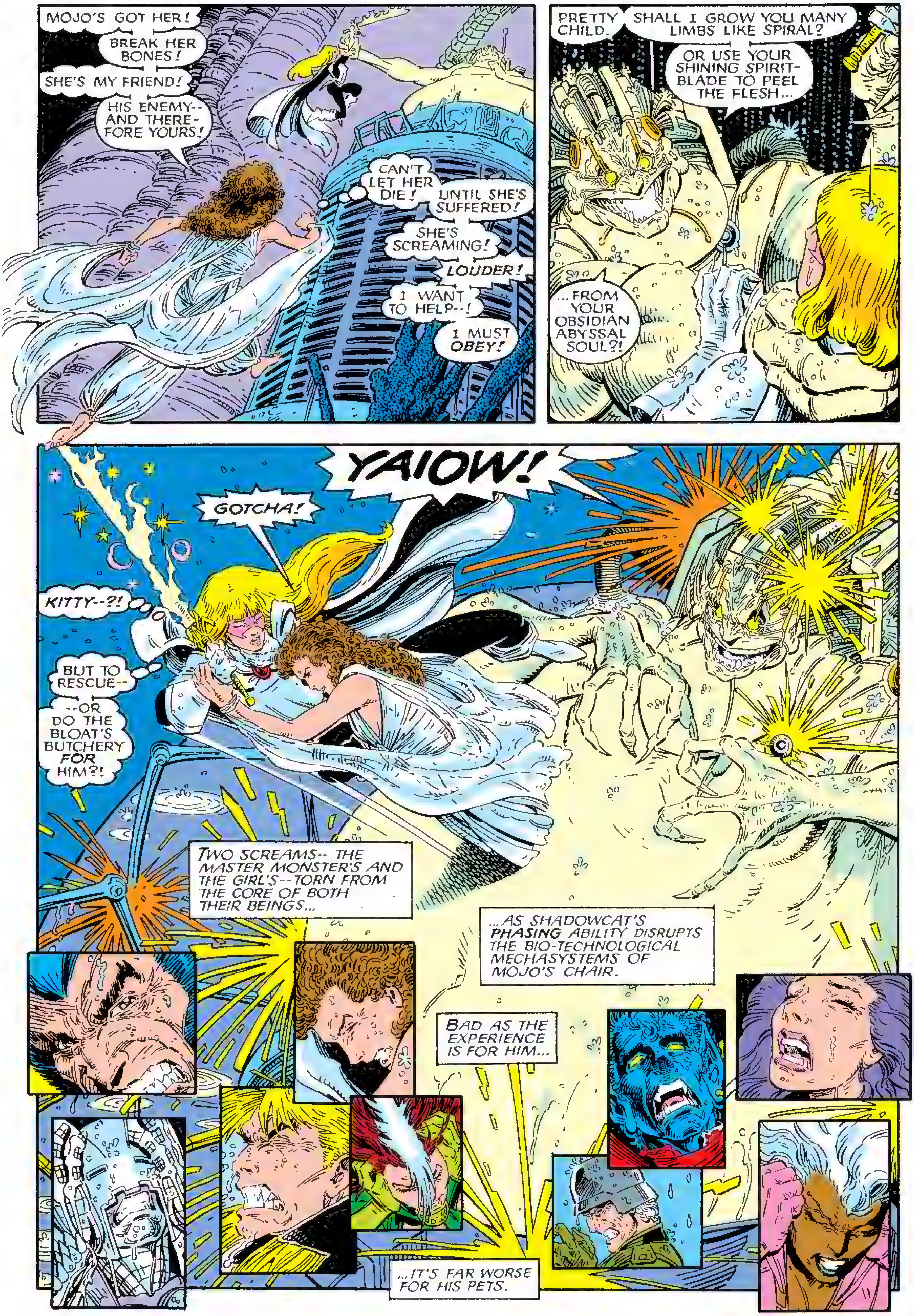
FATBOY'S THE KEY--
--HE'S CALLIN' THE PLAYS--
--AH TAKE *HIM* OUT...
...AN' MAYBE THE GAME'S-- *WHUA!??*
*LONGSHOT!*
*CANNONBALL TRIES TO BUCK HIM OFF...*
*...WITH A SPECTACULAR...*
*...LACK OF SUCCESS.*
*THE CROWD CHEERS.*
PERHAPS, WHERE SAM FAILED...
*...MAGMA* MIGHT SUCCEED--
-- BY RAISING A *VOLCANO!*
WHAT FIRE!
WHAT SPIRIT!
WHAT *FOOLISHNESS*--
--TO THINK THE LIFEBRINGER COULD ACTUALLY BE HARMED...
...WHEN HE HAS HIS LOVELY PETS...
...TO *PROTECT* HIM.
STORM'S SUMMONED A *MONSOON* TO DOUSE MY FLAMES!
VERY WELL, THEN--I'LL CREATE A *BIGGER*--!
MAGMA, *DON'T!*
THERE'S ALREADY TOO GREAT A RISK OF INNOCENT PEOPLE BEING HURT.
D'YOU WANT TO MAKE THINGS *WORSE?!*
I WANT TO *STOP* MOJO, MIRAGE--
--IF ONLY SOMEONE WILL TELL ME *HOW!*

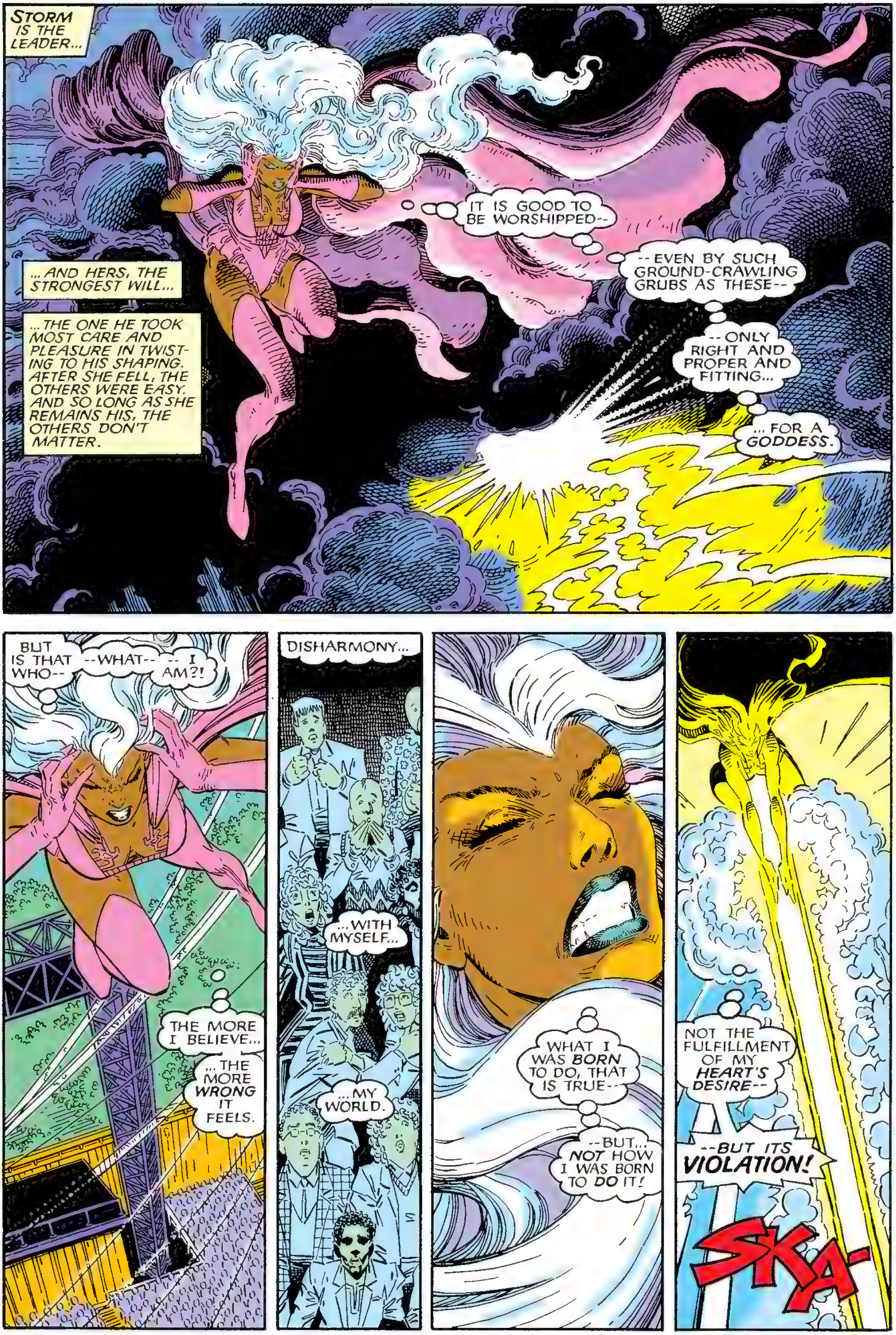

COLOSSUS--TOPPLING THAT PILLAR!
MY OWN STRENGTH DERIVES FROM SUNLIGHT.
AND I CAN ONLY STORE A LIMITED AMOUNT.
IF I RUN OUT, I'M FINISHED.
SO ARE THOSE PEOPLE BEHIND ME.
I SUPPOSE, THEN...
...I'D BETTER *NOT!*
SPLAM!
THE BIGGER THEY ARE...
...THE HARDER THEY...
SURPRISE!
...FA--
YOUR THOUGHTS, LI'L BOBBY--YOUR MEMORIES, YOUR SKILLS, YOUR *POWER*--
--NOW AN' FOREVER, THEY *ALL* BELONG TO M-- UNGNH!
*NO WAY,* ROGUE!
FOR THAT, SUGAR, AH'LL TEAR... AH'LL...
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!
IN SUNSPOT'S MEMORIES--IMAGES OF... *ME*--
--BUT *NOT* THE PERSON AH AM!
HOW COULD AH BE SO DIFFERENT?!
WHY AM AH SO CHANGED?!!
WHICH IS THE *REAL* ME?!?

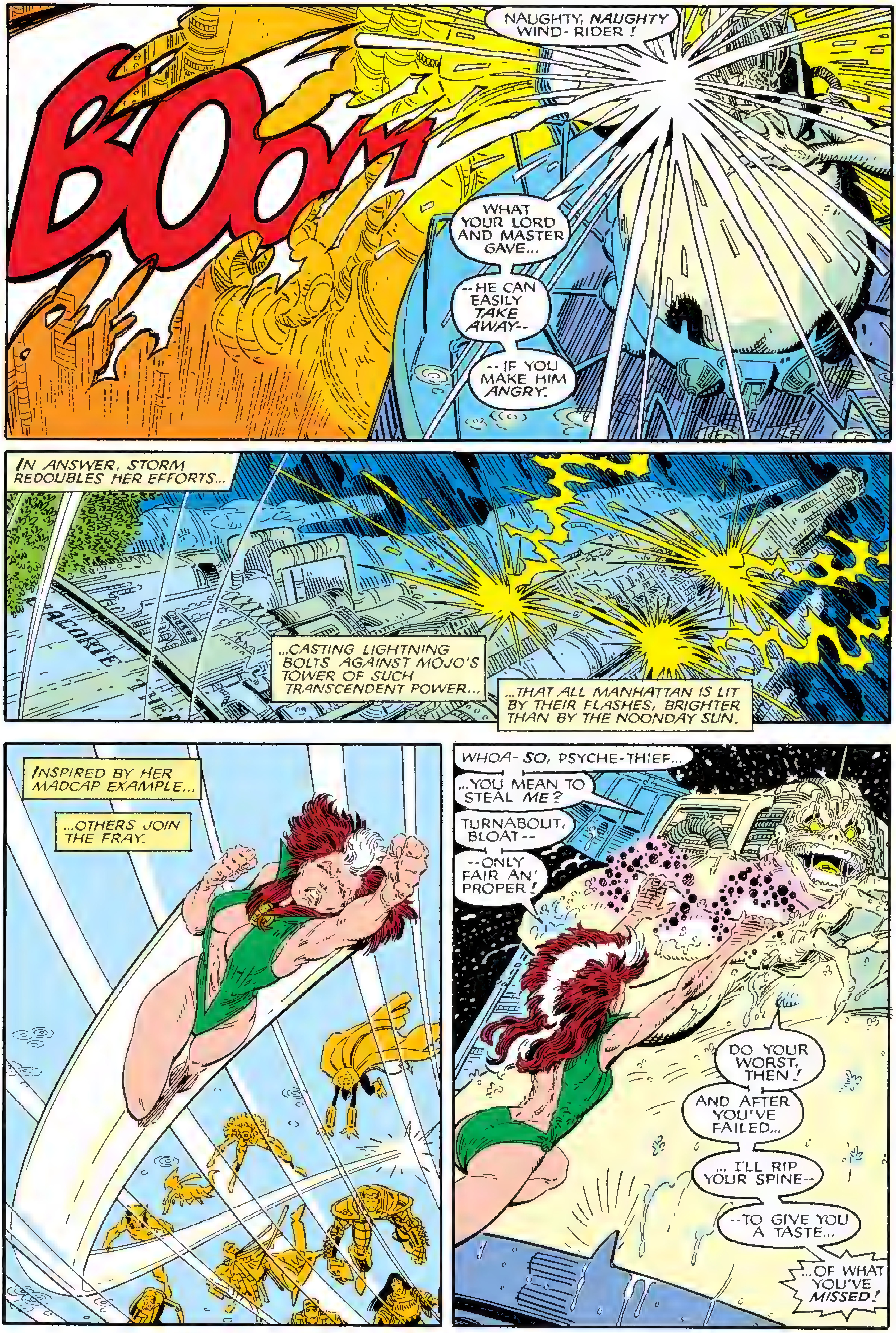
AS ROGUE STRUGGLES TO RECONCILE WHO SHE IS WITH WHO SHE WAS...
BAMF
...NIGHTCRAWLER CONCENTRATES...
BOP!
...ON HAVING A MARVELOUS TIME...
BAMF
...AT WOLFSBANE'S EXPENSE.
MY SOULSWORD STAGGERED WOLVIE!
BUT IT CAN ONLY AFFECT MAGIC-- DISRUPTING SPELLS AND ARCANE BEINGS!
WHATEVER MOJO DID TO THE X-MEN, THEN...
...IT MUST BE A FORM OF SORCERY!
GREAT! LET'S SEE HOW THE BLOAT LIKES IT...
... WHEN I USE MY BLADE ON HIM!
AGH!
HOW NICE OF YOU TO DROP IN, WITCHLING
HOW SILLY TO THINK YOU COULD CATCH ME UNAWARES.
TIME IS ON MOJO'S SIDE. THE LONGER THIS BATTLE TAKES...
...THE MORE COMPLETE BECOMES HIS HOLD OVER THE X-MEN.
PERHAPS, BY POSSESSING WOLVERINE...
...I CAN BREAK IT!
SACRE MERE--
--HE RESISTS!
CAN'T HOLD ME, GIRL.
NOTHIN' CAN HOLD ME!


I WON'T BE STOPPED!
FIGHT THE EVIL POWER THAT EMBRACES YOU, WOLVERINE!
SEE ME AS I AM--YOUR *FRIEND!*
YOUR WILL AIN'T NO MATCH FOR MINE, GIRL!
SEE YOURSELF--
--AS YOU *TRULY ARE!*
GOLDEN SKIN--
--SOON IT'LL BE STRIPED AN' STREAKED...
...IN *SCARLET...?!?*
MOJO!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!?
*M'SIEU* WOLVERINE--???
NO MORE NEED...
...TO BE SCARED, KARMA.
I'M...
...*MYSELF*...
...AGAIN.
HE MADE ME AN *ANIMAL*--
--TOOK ME BACK TO WHERE I WAS...
...WHERE PART OF ME...
...WILL *ALWAYS* LONG TO BE.
ALMOST GOT AWAY WITH IT, TOO.

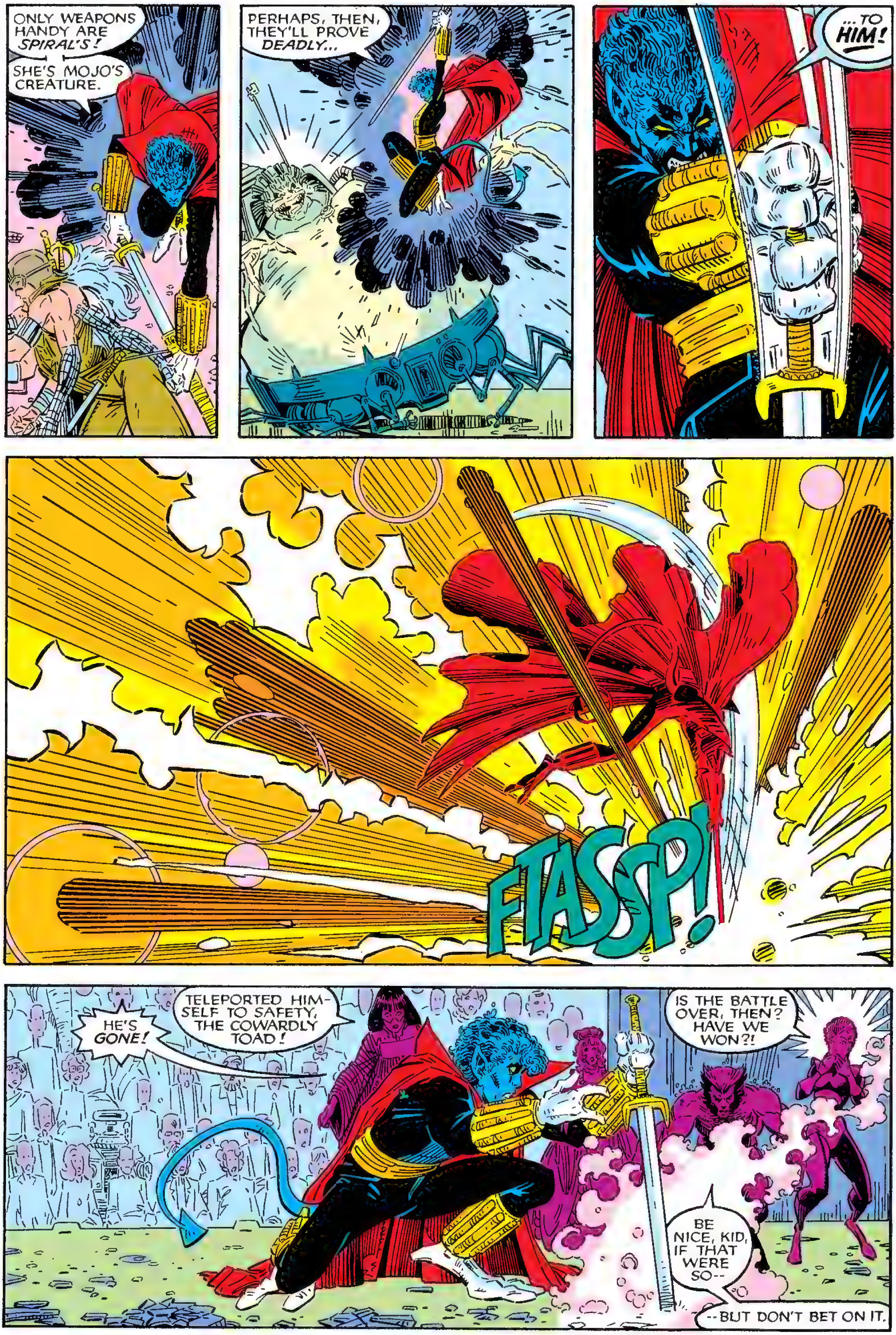
BUT IN MY TRADE...
..."ALMOST" AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH.
SUNSPOT'S RECOVERED FROM ROGUE'S ZAP.
KID LOOKS LIKE HE COULD USE A HAND.
THERE'S WARLOCK! POOR GUY-- MAGNETO ROYALLY FRIED HIS CIRCUITS.
GOTTA FIND A WAY TO *JUMPSTA*
HARRGH!
OW! OW! OW! OW! OW!
BETSY-- MOVING IN FOR THE KILL! EVEN LIKE THIS...
...SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL!
HOW CAN I FIGHT HER--
-- SHE'LL KNOW MY EVERY THOUGHT--?!
UNLESS-- THAT'S THE *KEY!*
SNIKT
"LET HER IN. FREE ACCESS TO MY WHOLE MIND. EVERY THOUGHT-- EVERY MEMORY-- EVERY *EMOTION!*"
HE SHOULD BE AFRAID--THAT'S WHY I HURT HIM--WHY ISN'T HE? ALL I PERCEIVE IS TRUST...
...AND *LOVE!*
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
IT IS MY NATURE-- MY DUTY-- TO *SLAY.*
YET DOUGLAS CARES FOR ME...
"...MORE THAN FOR HIS OWN LIFE.
"AND I, FOR HIM."
WOLVERINE --*NO!*
DOUGLAS-- FORGIVE ME! I-- *UNGPLGH!*
YOU BROKE THE BLOAT'S HOLD, TOO, PSYLOCKE?!
SNAKT
GOOD. TIDE'S TURNIN'-- BUT THIS SCRAP'S A LONG WAY FROM OVER.
WE CAN STILL LOSE.
SNIKT
HAD ME REALLY WORRIED THERE A MINUTE, LADY.
WE REALLY GOTTA STOP MEETING LIKE THIS. PEOPLE WILL TALK.
LET THEM.
TEUGKGH!
THAT GIRL --?!!
SHE'S A *GHOST!*
*ILLYANA?!?*

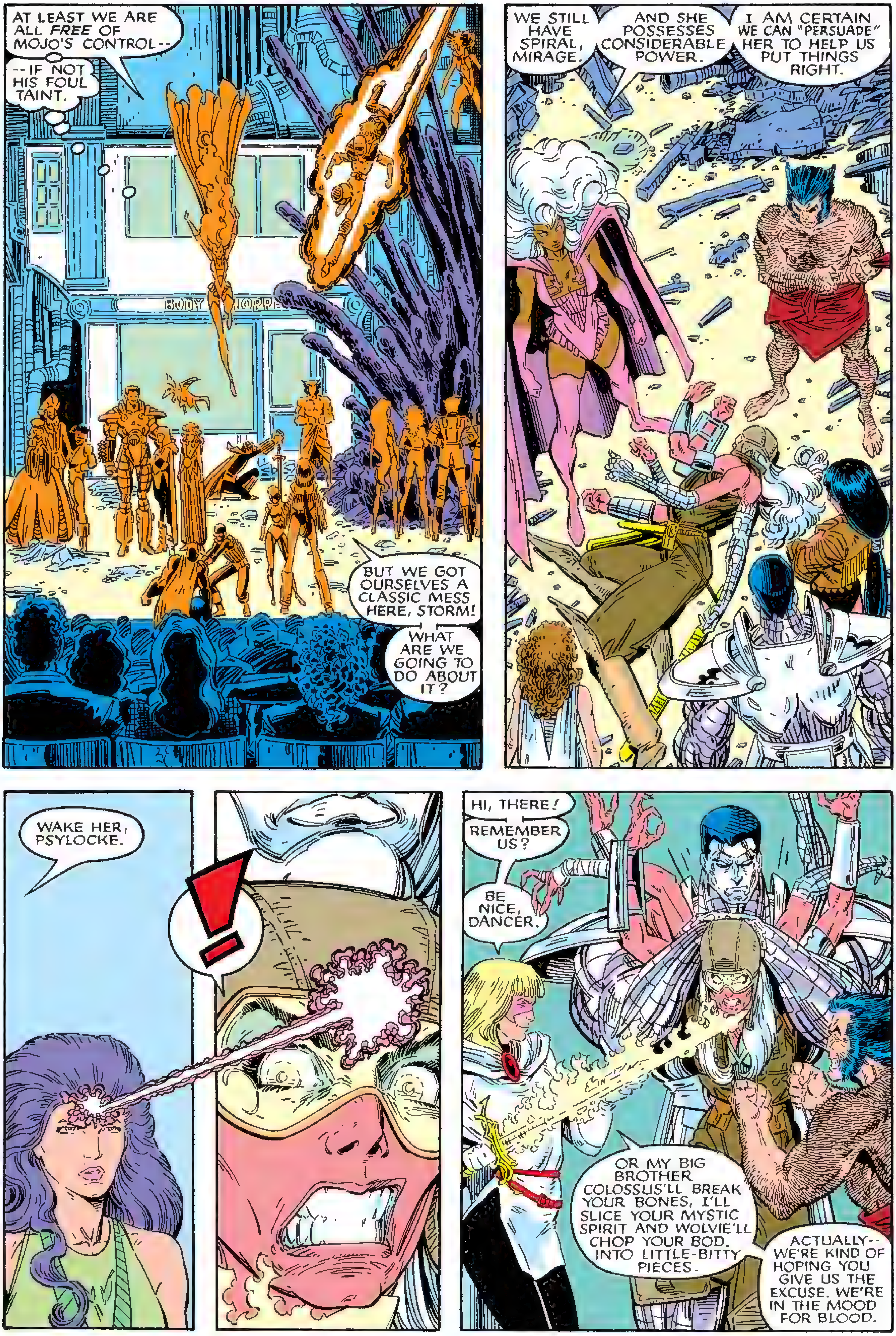

MOJO'S GOT HER!
BREAK HER BONES!
SHE'S MY FRIEND!
HIS ENEMY--AND THEREFORE YOURS!
CAN'T LET HER DIE!
UNTIL SHE'S SUFFERED!
SHE'S SCREAMING!
LOUDER!
I WANT TO HELP--!
I MUST OBEY!
PRETTY CHILD.
SHALL I GROW YOU MANY LIMBS LIKE SPIRAL?
OR USE YOUR SHINING SPIRIT-BLADE TO PEEL THE FLESH...
...FROM YOUR OBSIDIAN ABYSSAL SOUL?!
YAIOW!
GOTCHA!
KITTY--?!
BUT TO RESCUE--
--OR DO THE BLOAT'S BUTCHERY FOR HIM?!
TWO SCREAMS-- THE MASTER MONSTER'S AND THE GIRL'S--TORN FROM THE CORE OF BOTH THEIR BEINGS...
...AS SHADOWCAT'S PHASING ABILITY DISRUPTS THE BIO-TECHNOLOGICAL MECHASYSTEMS OF MOJO'S CHAIR.
BAD AS THE EXPERIENCE IS FOR HIM...
...IT'S FAR WORSE FOR HIS PETS.

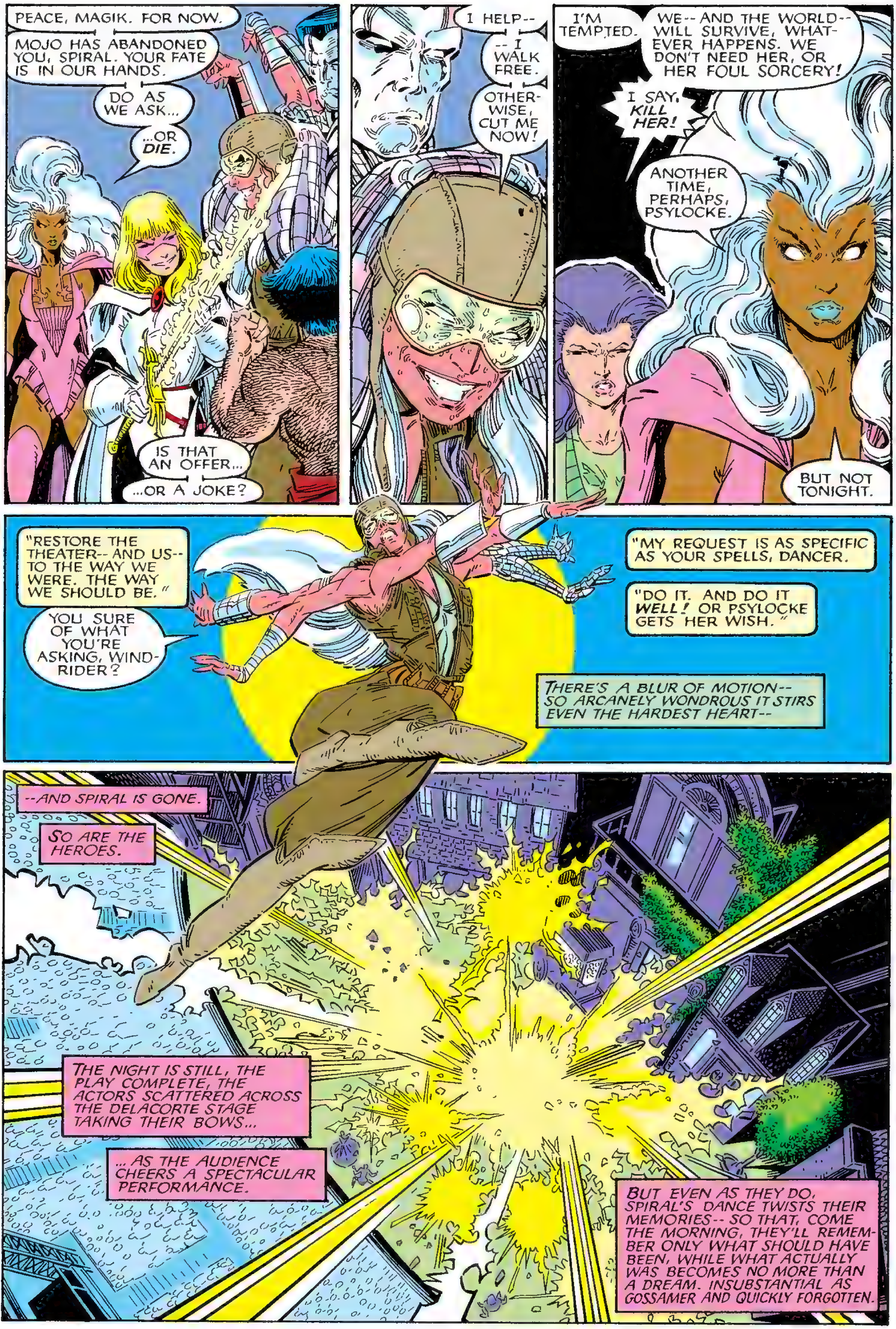

STORM IS THE LEADER...
...AND HERS, THE STRONGEST WILL...
...THE ONE HE TOOK MOST CARE AND PLEASURE IN TWISTING TO HIS SHAPING. AFTER SHE FELL, THE OTHERS WERE EASY. AND SO LONG AS SHE REMAINS HIS, THE OTHERS DON'T MATTER.
IT IS GOOD TO BE WORSHIPPED--
--EVEN BY SUCH GROUND-CRAWLING GRUBS AS THESE--
--ONLY RIGHT AND PROPER AND FITTING...
...FOR A GODDESS.
BUT IS THAT WHO--
--WHAT--
--I AM?!
THE MORE I BELIEVE...
...THE MORE WRONG IT FEELS.
DISHARMONY...
...WITH MYSELF...
...MY WORLD.
WHAT I WAS BORN TO DO, THAT IS TRUE--
--BUT... NOT HOW I WAS BORN TO DO IT!
NOT THE FULFILLMENT OF MY HEART'S DESIRE--
--BUT ITS VIOLATION!
SKA-

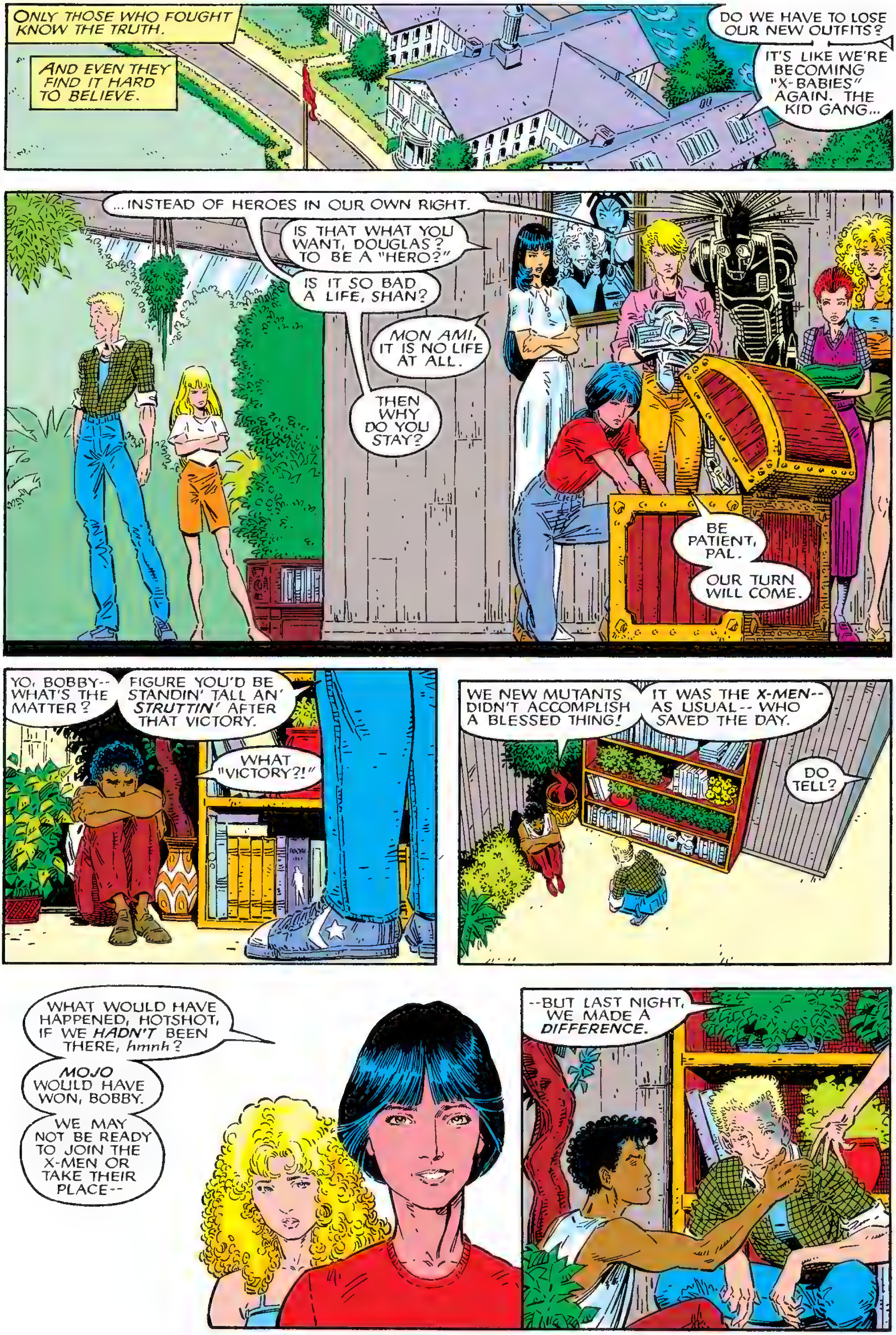

BOOM
NAUGHTY, *NAUGHTY* WIND-RIDER!
WHAT YOUR LORD AND MASTER GAVE...
--HE CAN EASILY *TAKE AWAY*--
--IF YOU MAKE HIM *ANGRY*.
IN ANSWER, STORM REDOUBLES HER EFFORTS...
...CASTING LIGHTNING BOLTS AGAINST MOJO'S TOWER OF SUCH TRANSCENDENT POWER...
...THAT ALL MANHATTAN IS LIT BY THEIR FLASHES, BRIGHTER THAN BY THE NOONDAY SUN.
INSPIRED BY HER MADCAP EXAMPLE...
...OTHERS JOIN THE FRAY.
WHOA- *SO*, PSYCHE-THIEF...
...YOU MEAN TO STEAL *ME*?
TURNABOUT, BLOAT--
--ONLY FAIR AN' PROPER!
DO YOUR WORST, THEN!
AND AFTER YOU'VE FAILED...
...I'LL RIP YOUR SPINE--
--TO GIVE YOU A TASTE...
...OF WHAT YOU'VE *MISSED*!

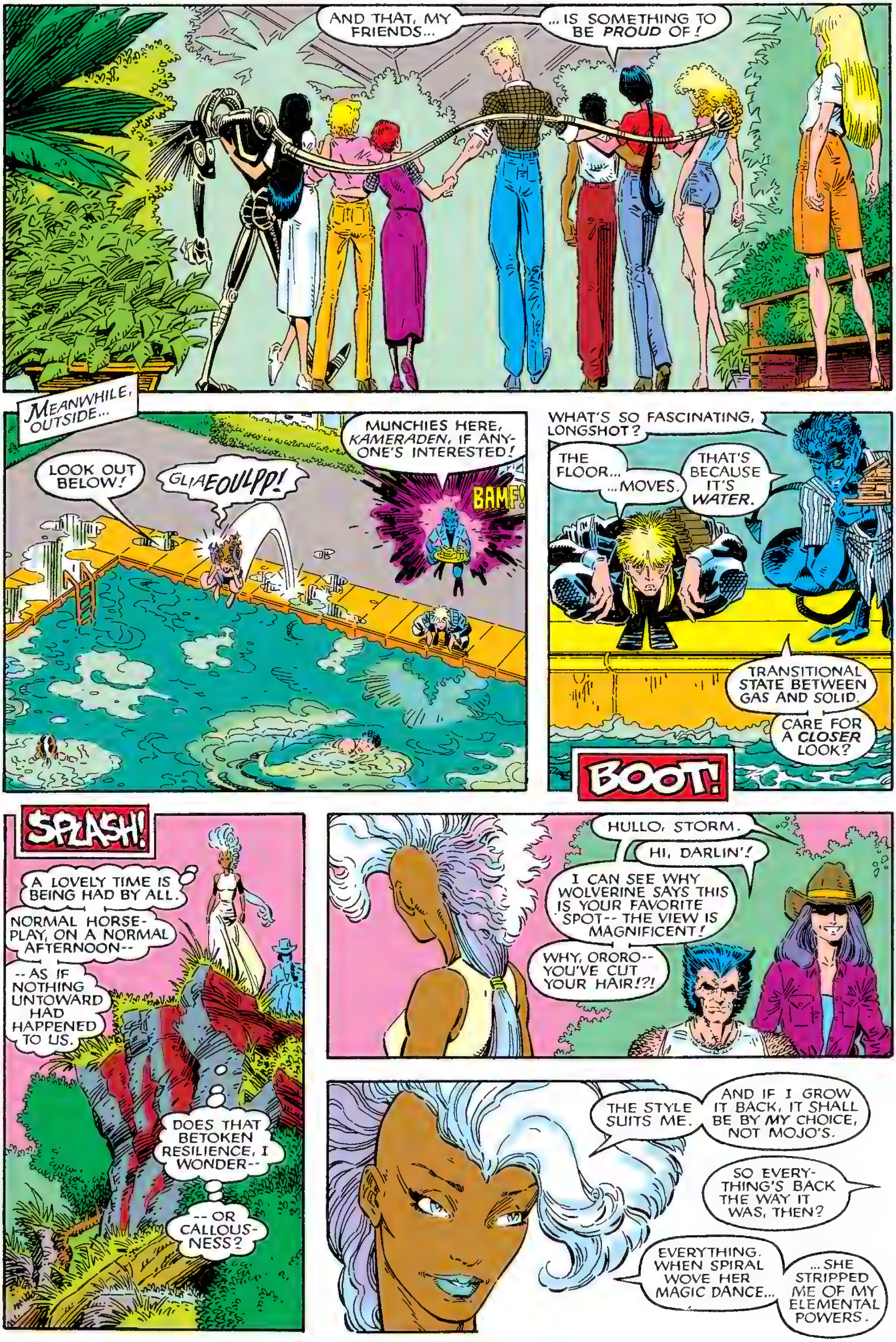
THERE'S NO... END TO HIM!
AH TAKE AN' TAKE--
--MORE THAN AH'VE EVER ABSORBED, FROM ANYBODY--
--SO SICK AN' FOUL AN' AWFUL, HE'S AN ABOMINATION...
...THAT GOES ON FOREVER!
ROGUE'S NO MATCH FOR MOJO!
ALONE-- NONE OF US ARE!
CATCH HER, SOMEONE!
BUT TOGETHER, PSYLOCKE--
--ACTING AS A TEAM--
--PERHAPS WE CAN BE!
ZPORCH!
SHADOWCAT CRIPPLED HIS CHAIR.
STORM ADDED TO THE DAMAGE, AS DID YOU AND ROGUE.
NOW, IT FALLS TO MAGNETO...
...TO DO HIS PART!
HEAT RESISTANT
AND COLOSSUS...
...AS WELL!
KPOW

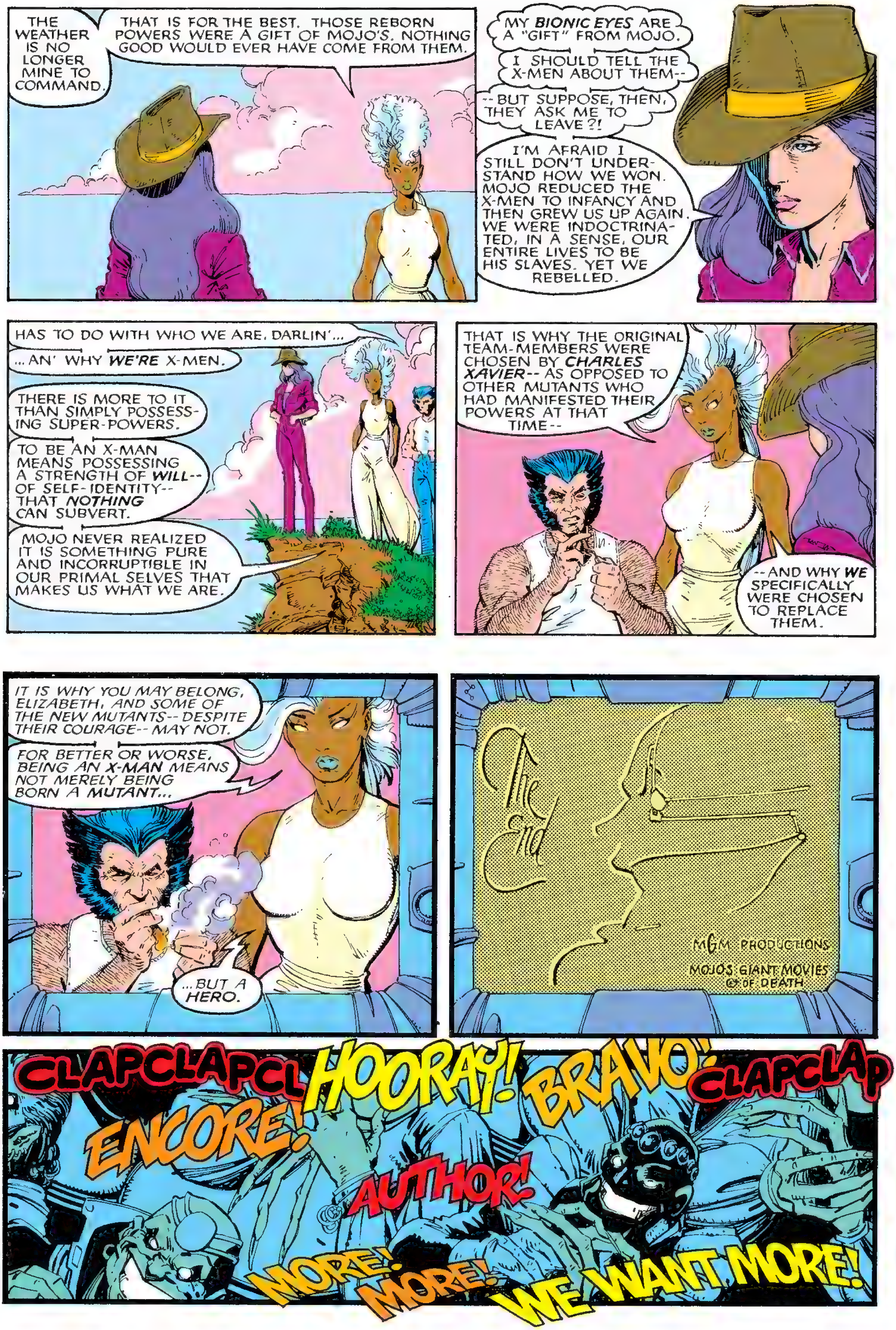

ONLY WEAPONS HANDY ARE *SPIRAL'S!*
SHE'S MOJO'S CREATURE.
PERHAPS, THEN, THEY'LL PROVE *DEADLY...*
...TO *HIM!*
FTASSP!
HE'S *GONE!*
TELEPORTED HIMSELF TO SAFETY, THE COWARDLY TOAD!
IS THE BATTLE OVER, THEN? HAVE WE WON?!
BE NICE, KID, IF THAT WERE SO--
--BUT DON'T BET ON IT.

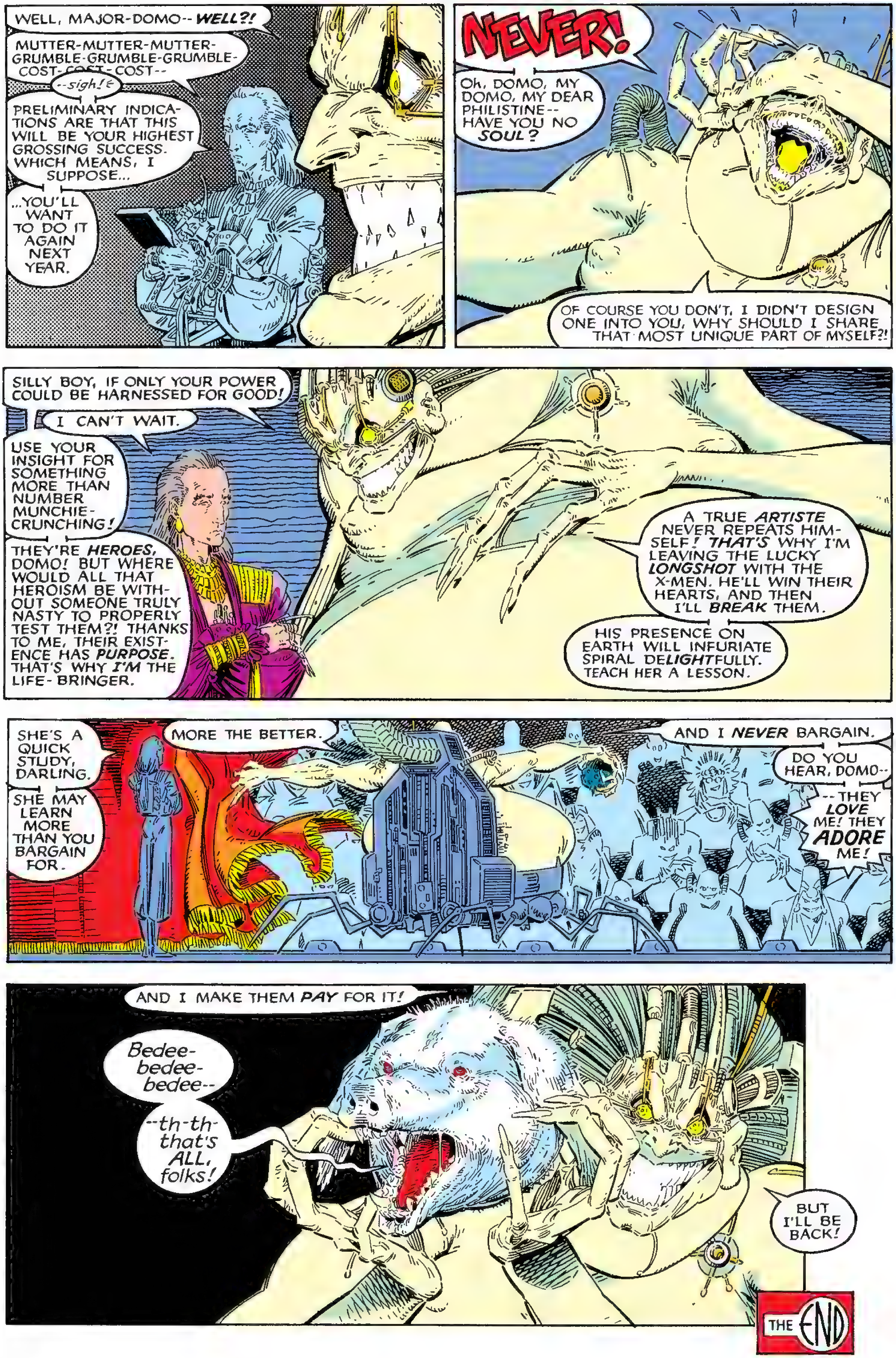

AT LEAST WE ARE ALL *FREE* OF MOJO'S CONTROL--
--IF NOT HIS FOUL TAINT.
BODY SHOPPE
BUT WE GOT OURSELVES A CLASSIC MESS HERE, STORM!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
WE STILL HAVE SPIRAL, MIRAGE.
AND SHE POSSESSES CONSIDERABLE POWER.
I AM CERTAIN WE CAN "PERSUADE" HER TO HELP US PUT THINGS RIGHT.
WAKE HER, PSYLOCKE.
!
HI, THERE!
REMEMBER US?
BE NICE, DANCER.
OR MY BIG BROTHER COLOSSUS'LL BREAK YOUR BONES, I'LL SLICE YOUR MYSTIC SPIRIT AND WOLVIE'LL CHOP YOUR BOD. INTO LITTLE-BITTY PIECES.
ACTUALLY-- WE'RE KIND OF HOPING YOU GIVE US THE EXCUSE. WE'RE IN THE MOOD FOR BLOOD.


PEACE, MAGIK. FOR NOW.
MOJO HAS ABANDONED YOU, SPIRAL. YOUR FATE IS IN OUR HANDS.
DO AS WE ASK...
...OR *DIE*.
IS THAT AN OFFER...
...OR A JOKE?
I HELP--
-- I WALK FREE.
OTHERWISE, CUT ME NOW!
I'M TEMPTED.
WE-- AND THE WORLD-- WILL SURVIVE, WHATEVER HAPPENS. WE DON'T NEED HER, OR HER FOUL SORCERY!
I SAY, *KILL HER!*
ANOTHER TIME, PERHAPS, PSYLOCKE.
BUT NOT TONIGHT.
"RESTORE THE THEATER-- AND US-- TO THE WAY WE WERE. THE WAY WE SHOULD BE."
YOU SURE OF WHAT YOU'RE ASKING, WINDRIDER?
"MY REQUEST IS AS SPECIFIC AS YOUR SPELLS, DANCER.
"DO IT. AND DO IT *WELL!* OR PSYLOCKE GETS HER WISH."
THERE'S A BLUR OF MOTION-- SO ARCANELY WONDROUS IT STIRS EVEN THE HARDEST HEART--
--AND SPIRAL IS GONE.
SO ARE THE HEROES.
THE NIGHT IS STILL, THE PLAY COMPLETE, THE ACTORS SCATTERED ACROSS THE DELACORTE STAGE TAKING THEIR BOWS...
... AS THE AUDIENCE CHEERS A SPECTACULAR PERFORMANCE.
BUT EVEN AS THEY DO, SPIRAL'S DANCE TWISTS THEIR MEMORIES-- SO THAT, COME THE MORNING, THEY'LL REMEMBER ONLY WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN, WHILE WHAT ACTUALLY WAS BECOMES NO MORE THAN A DREAM. INSUBSTANTIAL AS GOSSAMER AND QUICKLY FORGOTTEN.


ONLY THOSE WHO FOUGHT KNOW THE TRUTH.
AND EVEN THEY FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE.
DO WE HAVE TO LOSE OUR NEW OUTFITS?
IT'S LIKE WE'RE BECOMING "X-BABIES" AGAIN. THE KID GANG...
...INSTEAD OF HEROES IN OUR OWN RIGHT.
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT, DOUGLAS? TO BE A "HERO?"
IS IT SO BAD A LIFE, SHAN?
MON AMI, IT IS NO LIFE AT ALL.
THEN WHY DO YOU STAY?
BE PATIENT, PAL.
OUR TURN WILL COME.
YO, BOBBY-- WHAT'S THE MATTER?
FIGURE YOU'D BE STANDIN' TALL AN' STRUTTIN' AFTER THAT VICTORY.
WHAT "VICTORY?!"
WE NEW MUTANTS DIDN'T ACCOMPLISH A BLESSED THING!
IT WAS THE X-MEN-- AS USUAL-- WHO SAVED THE DAY.
DO TELL?
WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED, HOTSHOT, IF WE HADN'T BEEN THERE, hmnh?
MOJO WOULD HAVE WON, BOBBY.
WE MAY NOT BE READY TO JOIN THE X-MEN OR TAKE THEIR PLACE--
--BUT LAST NIGHT, WE MADE A DIFFERENCE.


AND THAT, MY FRIENDS...
...IS SOMETHING TO BE *PROUD* OF!
MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE...
LOOK OUT BELOW!
GLIAEOULPP!
MUNCHIES HERE, *KAMERADEN*, IF ANYONE'S INTERESTED!
BAMF!
WHAT'S SO FASCINATING, LONGSHOT?
THE FLOOR...
...MOVES.
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S *WATER*.
TRANSITIONAL STATE BETWEEN GAS AND SOLID.
CARE FOR A *CLOSER* LOOK?
BOOT!
SPLASH!
A LOVELY TIME IS BEING HAD BY ALL.
NORMAL HORSEPLAY, ON A NORMAL AFTERNOON--
--AS IF NOTHING UNTOWARD HAD HAPPENED TO US.
DOES THAT BETOKEN RESILIENCE, I WONDER--
--OR CALLOUSNESS?
HULLO, STORM.
HI, DARLIN'!
I CAN SEE WHY WOLVERINE SAYS THIS IS YOUR FAVORITE SPOT-- THE VIEW IS MAGNIFICENT!
WHY, ORORO-- YOU'VE CUT YOUR HAIR!?!
THE STYLE SUITS ME.
AND IF I GROW IT BACK, IT SHALL BE BY *MY* CHOICE, NOT MOJO'S.
SO EVERYTHING'S BACK THE WAY IT WAS, THEN?
EVERYTHING. WHEN SPIRAL WOVE HER MAGIC DANCE...
...SHE STRIPPED ME OF MY ELEMENTAL POWERS.


THE WEATHER IS NO LONGER MINE TO COMMAND.
THAT IS FOR THE BEST. THOSE REBORN POWERS WERE A GIFT OF MOJO'S. NOTHING GOOD WOULD EVER HAVE COME FROM THEM.
MY *BIONIC EYES* ARE A "GIFT" FROM MOJO.
I SHOULD TELL THE X-MEN ABOUT THEM--
--BUT SUPPOSE, THEN, THEY ASK ME TO LEAVE?!
I'M AFRAID I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW WE WON. MOJO REDUCED THE X-MEN TO INFANCY AND THEN GREW US UP AGAIN. WE WERE INDOCTRINATED, IN A SENSE, OUR ENTIRE LIVES TO BE HIS SLAVES. YET WE REBELLED.
HAS TO DO WITH WHO WE ARE, DARLIN'...
...AN' WHY *WE'RE* X-MEN.
THERE IS MORE TO IT THAN SIMPLY POSSESSING SUPER-POWERS.
TO BE AN X-MAN MEANS POSSESSING A STRENGTH OF *WILL*-- OF SELF-IDENTITY-- THAT *NOTHING* CAN SUBVERT.
MOJO NEVER REALIZED IT IS SOMETHING PURE AND INCORRUPTIBLE IN OUR PRIMAL SELVES THAT MAKES US WHAT WE ARE.
THAT IS WHY THE ORIGINAL TEAM-MEMBERS WERE CHOSEN BY *CHARLES XAVIER*-- AS OPPOSED TO OTHER MUTANTS WHO HAD MANIFESTED THEIR POWERS AT THAT TIME--
--AND WHY *WE* SPECIFICALLY WERE CHOSEN TO REPLACE THEM.
*IT IS WHY YOU MAY BELONG, ELIZABETH, AND SOME OF THE NEW MUTANTS-- DESPITE THEIR COURAGE-- MAY NOT.*
*FOR BETTER OR WORSE, BEING AN **X-MAN** MEANS NOT MERELY BEING BORN A **MUTANT**...*
*...BUT A HERO.*
The End
MGM PRODUCTIONS
MOJOS GIANT MOVIES
© OF DEATH
CLAPCLAPCL
HOORAY!
BRAVO!
CLAPCLAP
ENCORE!
AUTHOR!
MORE!
MORE!
WE WANT MORE!


WELL, MAJOR-DOMO-- WELL?!
MUTTER-MUTTER-MUTTER-GRUMBLE-GRUMBLE-GRUMBLE-COST-COST-COST--
--sigh!--
PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS ARE THAT THIS WILL BE YOUR HIGHEST GROSSING SUCCESS. WHICH MEANS, I SUPPOSE...
...YOU'LL WANT TO DO IT AGAIN NEXT YEAR.
NEVER!
Oh, DOMO, MY DOMO, MY DEAR PHILISTINE-- HAVE YOU NO SOUL?
OF COURSE YOU DON'T. I DIDN'T DESIGN ONE INTO YOU. WHY SHOULD I SHARE THAT MOST UNIQUE PART OF MYSELF?!
SILLY BOY, IF ONLY YOUR POWER COULD BE HARNESSED FOR GOOD!
I CAN'T WAIT.
USE YOUR INSIGHT FOR SOMETHING MORE THAN NUMBER MUNCHIE-CRUNCHING!
THEY'RE HEROES, DOMO! BUT WHERE WOULD ALL THAT HEROISM BE WITHOUT SOMEONE TRULY NASTY TO PROPERLY TEST THEM?! THANKS TO ME, THEIR EXISTENCE HAS PURPOSE. THAT'S WHY I'M THE LIFE-BRINGER.
A TRUE ARTISTE NEVER REPEATS HIMSELF! THAT'S WHY I'M LEAVING THE LUCKY LONGSHOT WITH THE X-MEN. HE'LL WIN THEIR HEARTS, AND THEN I'LL BREAK THEM.
HIS PRESENCE ON EARTH WILL INFURIATE SPIRAL DELIGHTFULLY. TEACH HER A LESSON.
SHE'S A QUICK STUDY, DARLING.
SHE MAY LEARN MORE THAN YOU BARGAIN FOR.
MORE THE BETTER.
AND I NEVER BARGAIN.
DO YOU HEAR, DOMO--
--THEY LOVE ME! THEY ADORE ME!
AND I MAKE THEM PAY FOR IT!
Bedee-bedee-bedee--
--th-th-that's ALL, folks!
BUT I'LL BE BACK!
THE END

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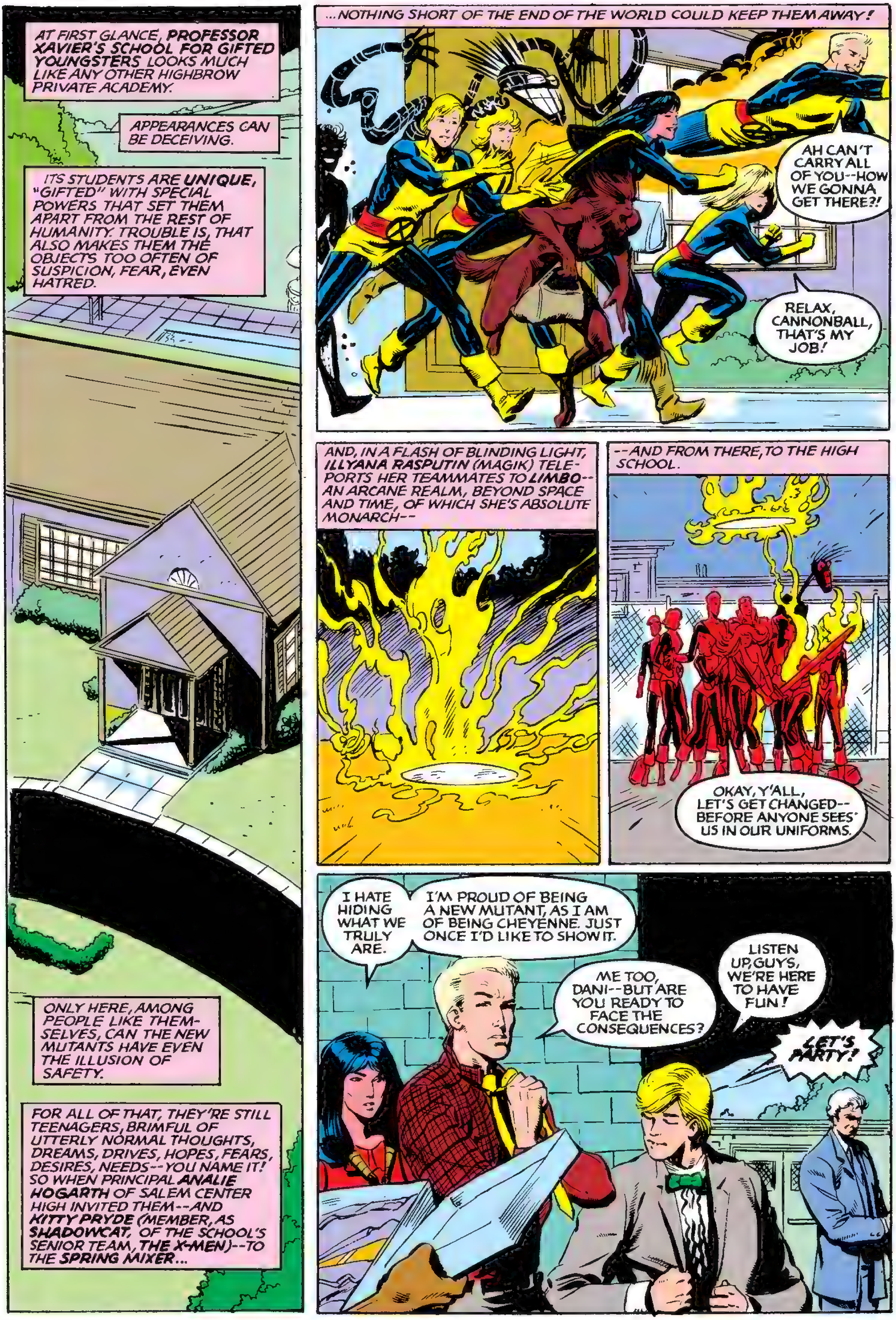
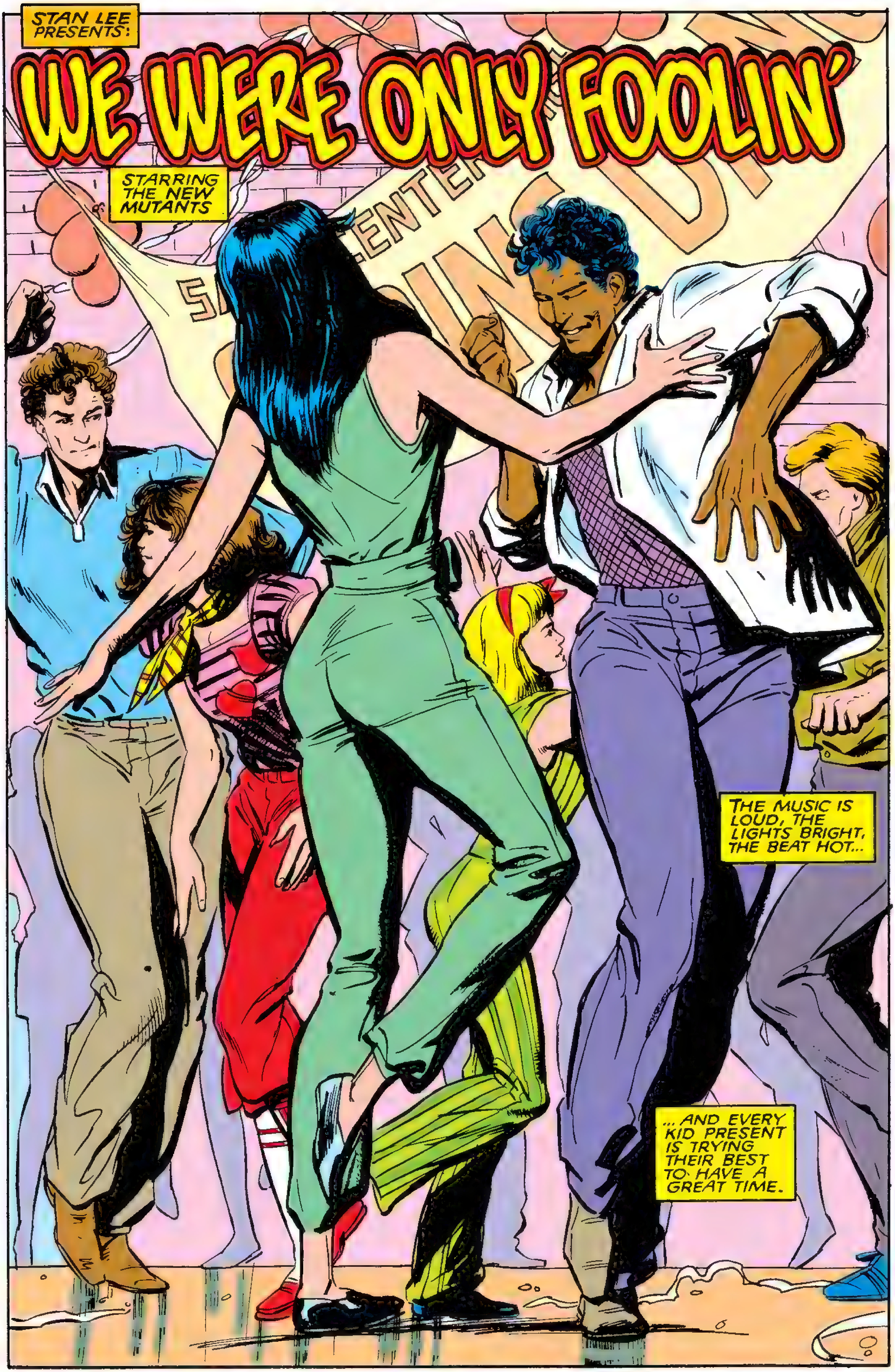
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE NEW MUTANTS®


AT FIRST GLANCE, PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS LOOKS MUCH LIKE ANY OTHER HIGHBROW PRIVATE ACADEMY.
APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEIVING.
ITS STUDENTS ARE UNIQUE, "GIFTED" WITH SPECIAL POWERS THAT SET THEM APART FROM THE REST OF HUMANITY. TROUBLE IS, THAT ALSO MAKES THEM THE OBJECTS TOO OFTEN OF SUSPICION, FEAR, EVEN HATRED.
ONLY HERE, AMONG PEOPLE LIKE THEMSELVES, CAN THE NEW MUTANTS HAVE EVEN THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY.
FOR ALL OF THAT, THEY'RE STILL TEENAGERS, BRIMFUL OF UTTERLY NORMAL THOUGHTS, DREAMS, DRIVES, HOPES, FEARS, DESIRES, NEEDS--YOU NAME IT! SO WHEN PRINCIPAL ANALIE HOGARTH OF SALEM CENTER HIGH INVITED THEM--AND KITTY PRYDE (MEMBER, AS SHADOWCAT, OF THE SCHOOL'S SENIOR TEAM, THE X-MEN)--TO THE SPRING MIXER...
...NOTHING SHORT OF THE END OF THE WORLD COULD KEEP THEM AWAY!
AH CAN'T CARRY ALL OF YOU--HOW WE GONNA GET THERE?!
RELAX, CANNONBALL, THAT'S MY JOB!
AND, IN A FLASH OF BLINDING LIGHT, ILLYANA RASPUTIN (MAGIK) TELEPORTS HER TEAMMATES TO LIMBO--AN ARCANE REALM, BEYOND SPACE AND TIME, OF WHICH SHE'S ABSOLUTE MONARCH--
--AND FROM THERE, TO THE HIGH SCHOOL.
OKAY, Y'ALL, LET'S GET CHANGED--BEFORE ANYONE SEES US IN OUR UNIFORMS.
I HATE HIDING WHAT WE TRULY ARE.
I'M PROUD OF BEING A NEW MUTANT, AS I AM OF BEING CHEYENNE. JUST ONCE I'D LIKE TO SHOW IT.
ME TOO, DANI--BUT ARE YOU READY TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES?
LISTEN UP, GUYS, WE'RE HERE TO HAVE FUN!
LET'S PARTY!


STAN LEE PRESENTS:
WE WERE ONLY FOOLIN'
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS
THE MUSIC IS LOUD, THE LIGHTS BRIGHT, THE BEAT HOT...
...AND EVERY KID PRESENT IS TRYING THEIR BEST TO HAVE A GREAT TIME.

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CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND BOB McLEOD

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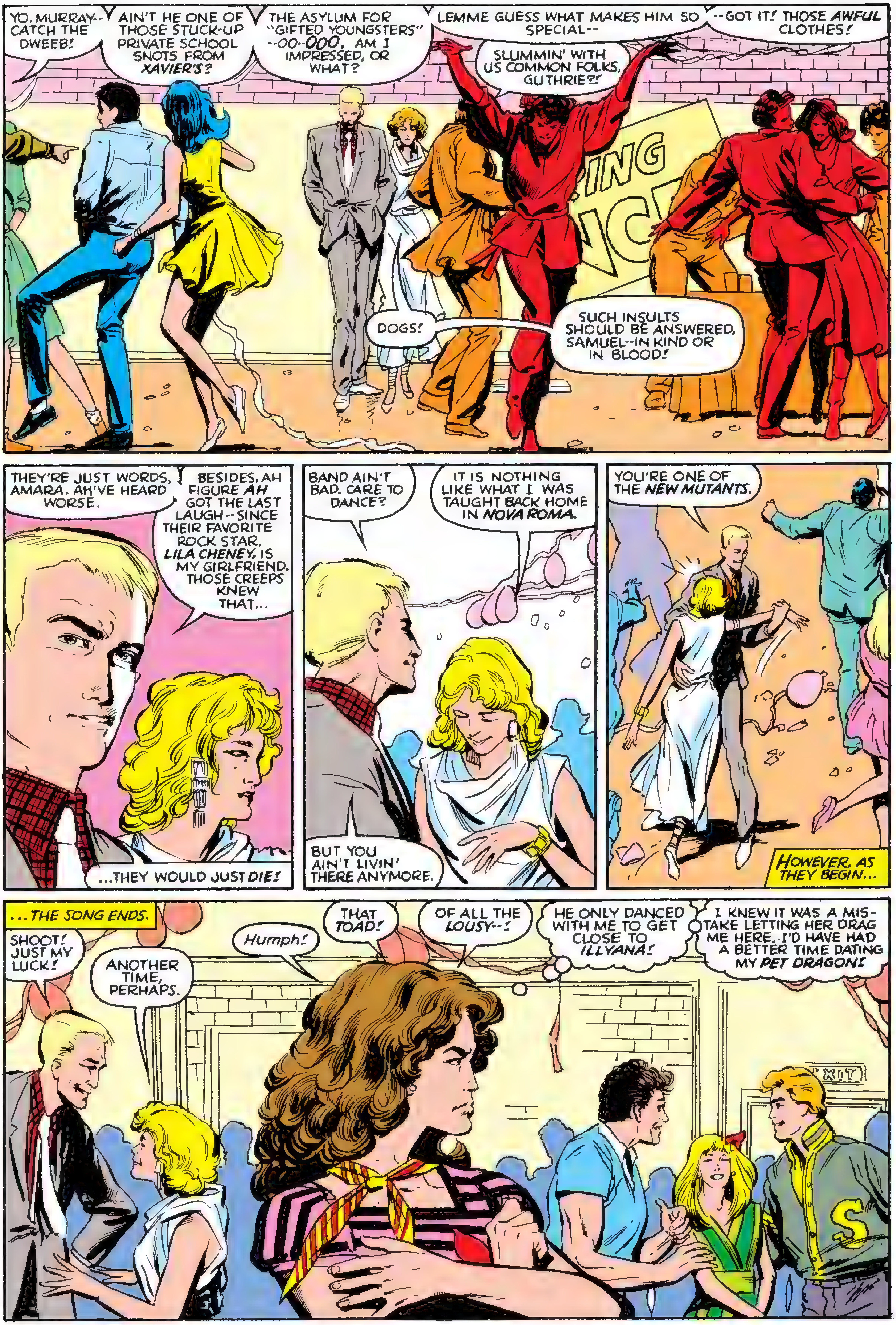
YO, MURRAY--CATCH THE DWEEB!
AIN'T HE ONE OF THOSE STUCK-UP PRIVATE SCHOOL SNOTS FROM *XAVIER'S?*
THE ASYLUM FOR "GIFTED YOUNGSTERS" --OO--*OOO*, AM I IMPRESSED, OR WHAT?
LEMME GUESS WHAT MAKES HIM SO SPECIAL--
--GOT IT! THOSE *AWFUL* CLOTHES!
SLUMMIN' WITH US COMMON FOLKS, GUTHRIE?!
ING
NCE
DOGS!
SUCH INSULTS SHOULD BE ANSWERED, SAMUEL--IN KIND OR IN BLOOD!
THEY'RE JUST WORDS, AMARA. AH'VE HEARD WORSE.
BESIDES, AH FIGURE *AH* GOT THE LAST LAUGH--SINCE THEIR FAVORITE ROCK STAR, *LILA CHENEY,* IS MY GIRLFRIEND. THOSE CREEPS KNEW THAT...
...THEY WOULD JUST *DIE!*
BAND AIN'T BAD. CARE TO DANCE?
IT IS NOTHING LIKE WHAT I WAS TAUGHT BACK HOME IN *NOVA ROMA.*
BUT YOU AIN'T LIVIN' THERE ANYMORE.
YOU'RE ONE OF THE *NEW MUTANTS.*
*HOWEVER, AS THEY BEGIN...*
*...THE SONG ENDS.*
SHOOT! JUST MY LUCK!
ANOTHER TIME, PERHAPS.
*Humph!*
THAT *TOAD!*
OF ALL THE *LOUSY*--!
HE ONLY DANCED WITH ME TO GET CLOSE TO *ILLYANA!*
I KNEW IT WAS A MISTAKE LETTING HER DRAG ME HERE. I'D HAVE HAD A BETTER TIME DATING MY *PET DRAGON!*
XIT
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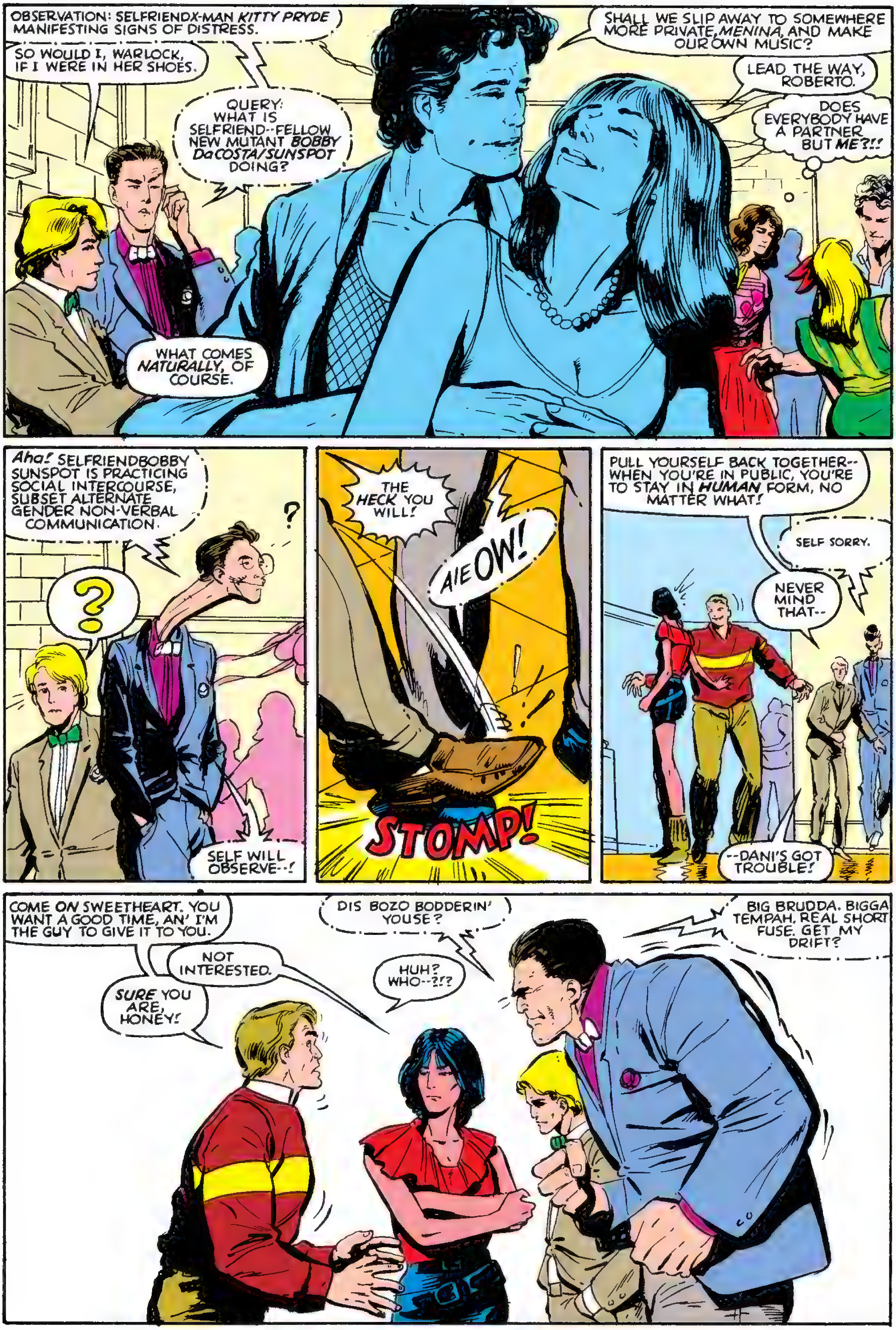
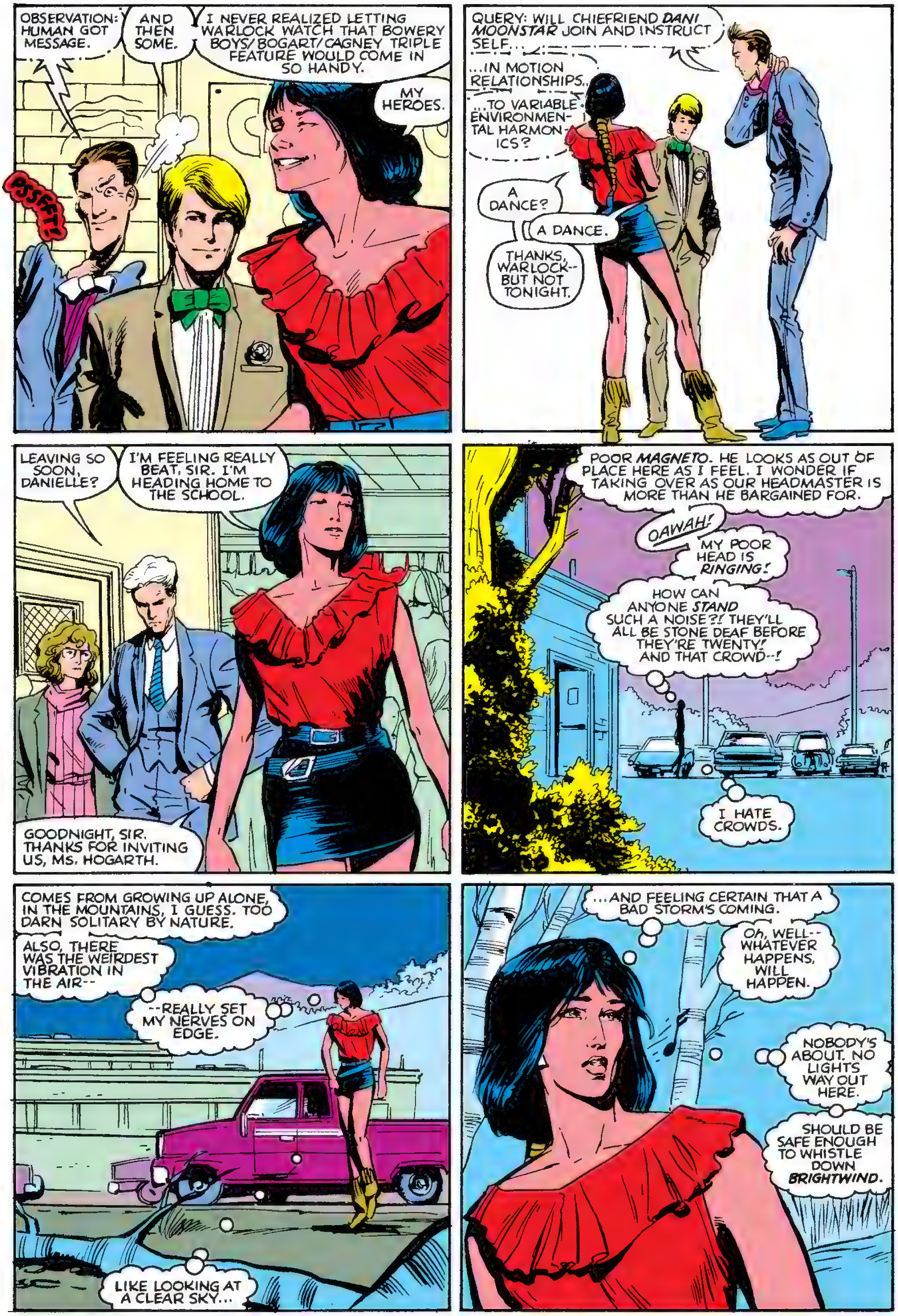
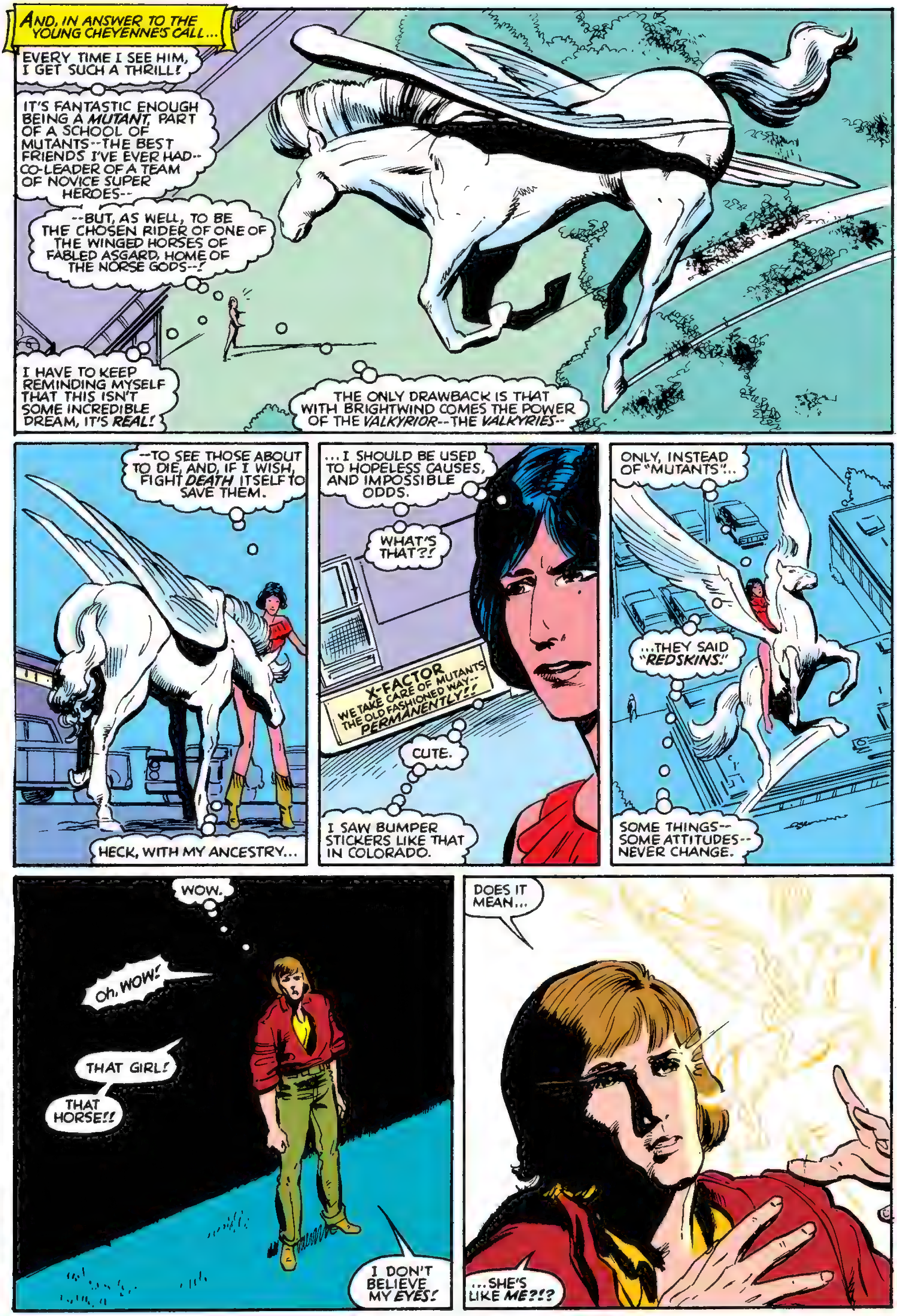
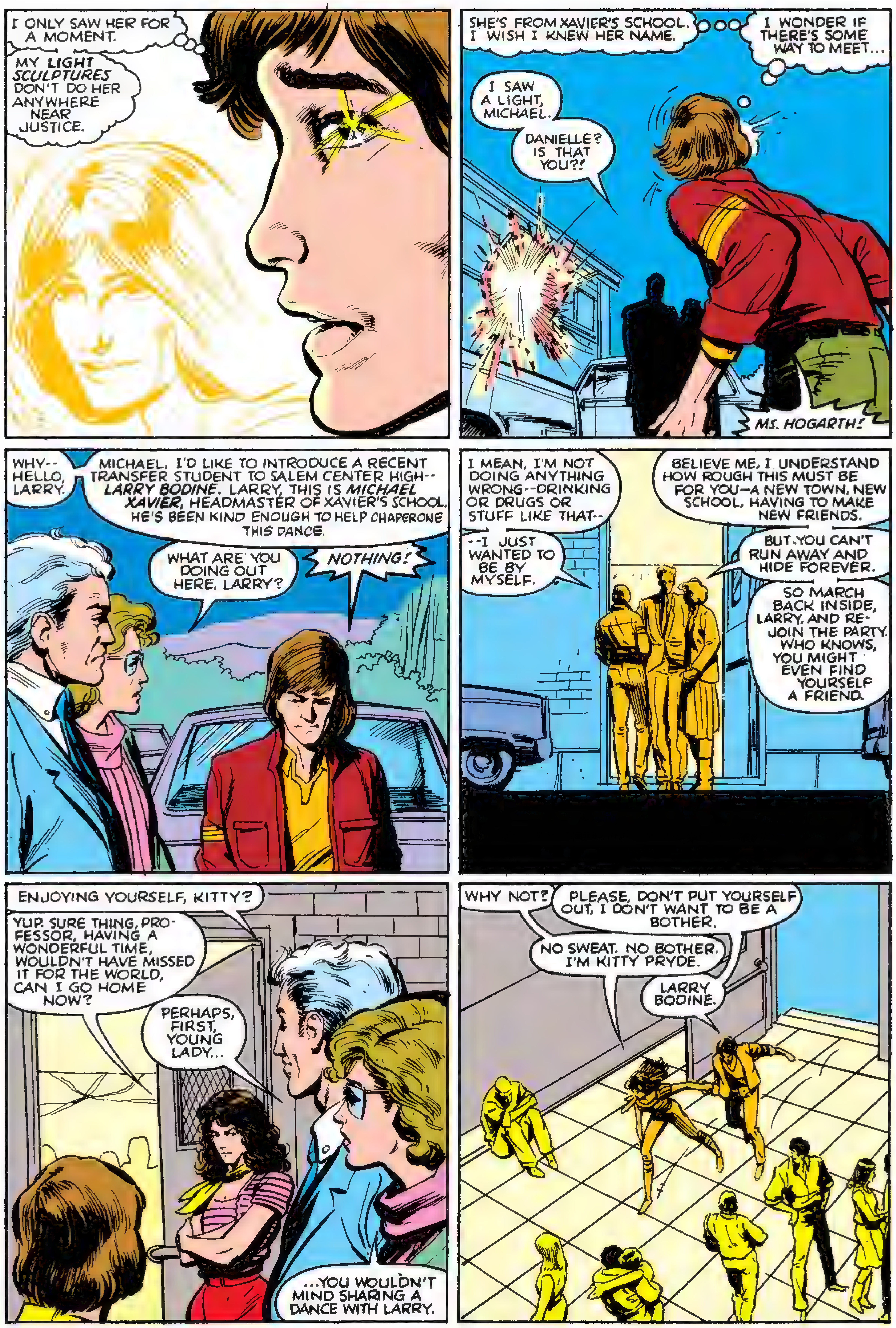
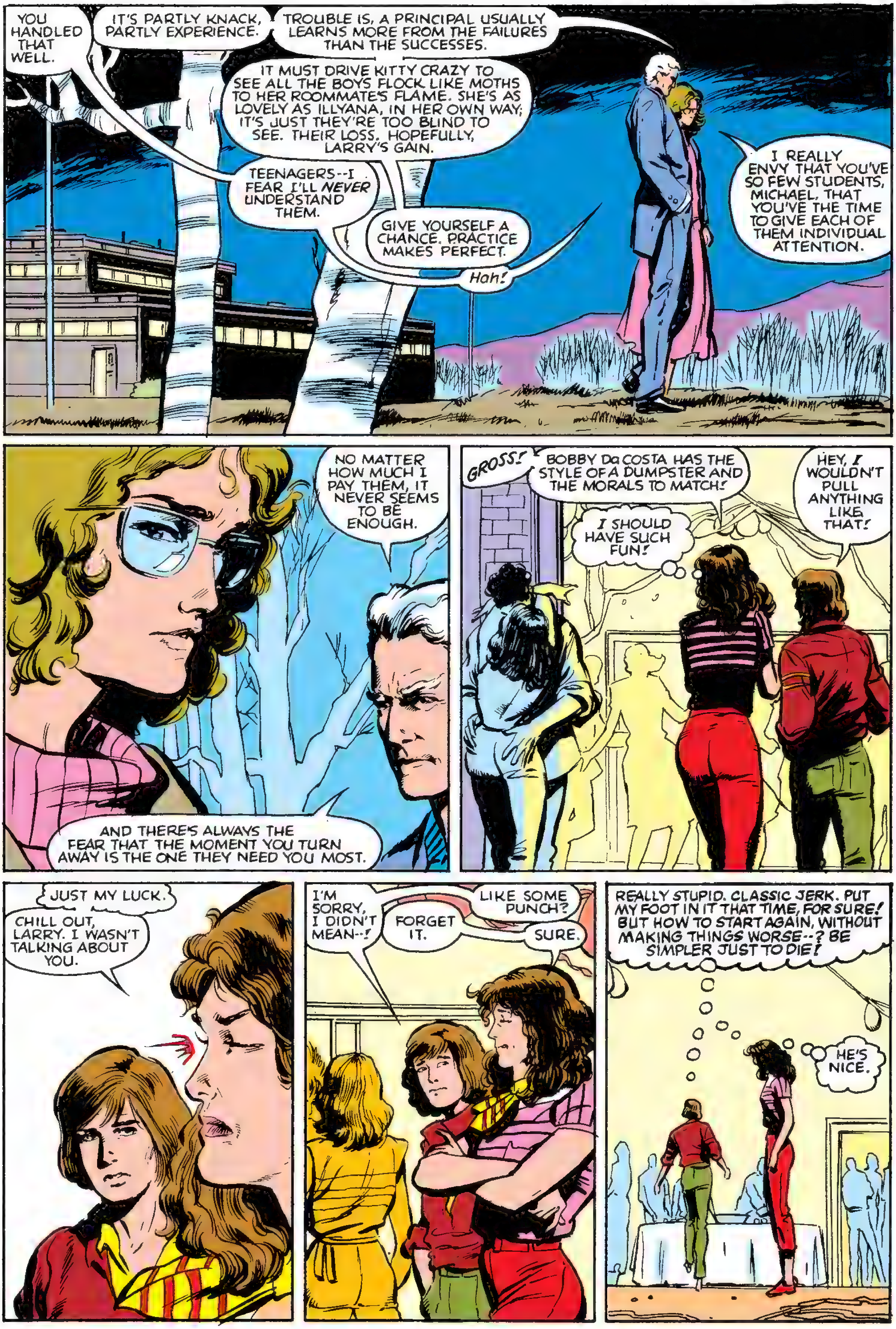
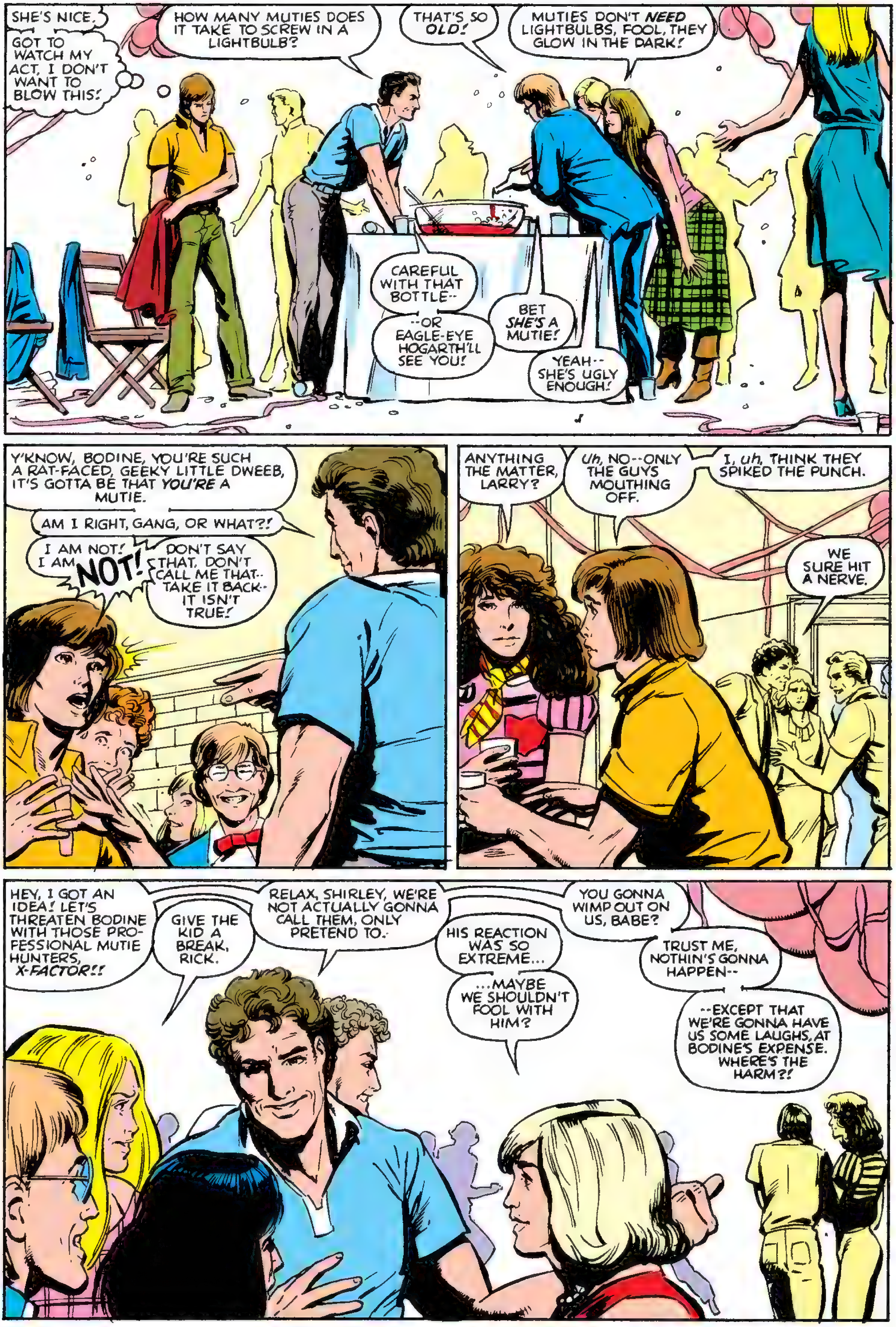

OBSERVATION: SELFRIEND X-MAN *KITTY PRYDE* MANIFESTING SIGNS OF DISTRESS.
SO WOULD I, WARLOCK, IF I WERE IN HER SHOES.
QUERY: WHAT IS SELFRIEND--FELLOW NEW MUTANT *BOBBY DaCOSTA/SUNSPOT* DOING?
WHAT COMES *NATURALLY*, OF COURSE.
SHALL WE SLIP AWAY TO SOMEWHERE MORE PRIVATE, *MENINA*, AND MAKE OUR OWN MUSIC?
LEAD THE WAY, ROBERTO.
DOES EVERYBODY HAVE A PARTNER BUT *ME?!!*
*Aha!* SELFRIEND BOBBY SUNSPOT IS PRACTICING SOCIAL INTERCOURSE, SUBSET ALTERNATE GENDER NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION.
?
?
SELF WILL OBSERVE--!
THE *HECK* YOU WILL!
AIE OW!
!
STOMP!
PULL YOURSELF BACK TOGETHER--WHEN YOU'RE IN PUBLIC, YOU'RE TO STAY IN *HUMAN* FORM, NO MATTER WHAT!
SELF SORRY.
NEVER MIND THAT--
--DANI'S GOT TROUBLE!
COME *ON* SWEETHEART. YOU WANT A GOOD TIME, AN' I'M THE GUY TO GIVE IT TO YOU.
NOT INTERESTED.
*SURE* YOU ARE, HONEY!
DIS BOZO BODDERIN' YOUSE?
HUH? WHO--?!?
BIG BRUDDA. BIGGA TEMPAH. REAL SHORT FUSE. GET MY DRIFT?

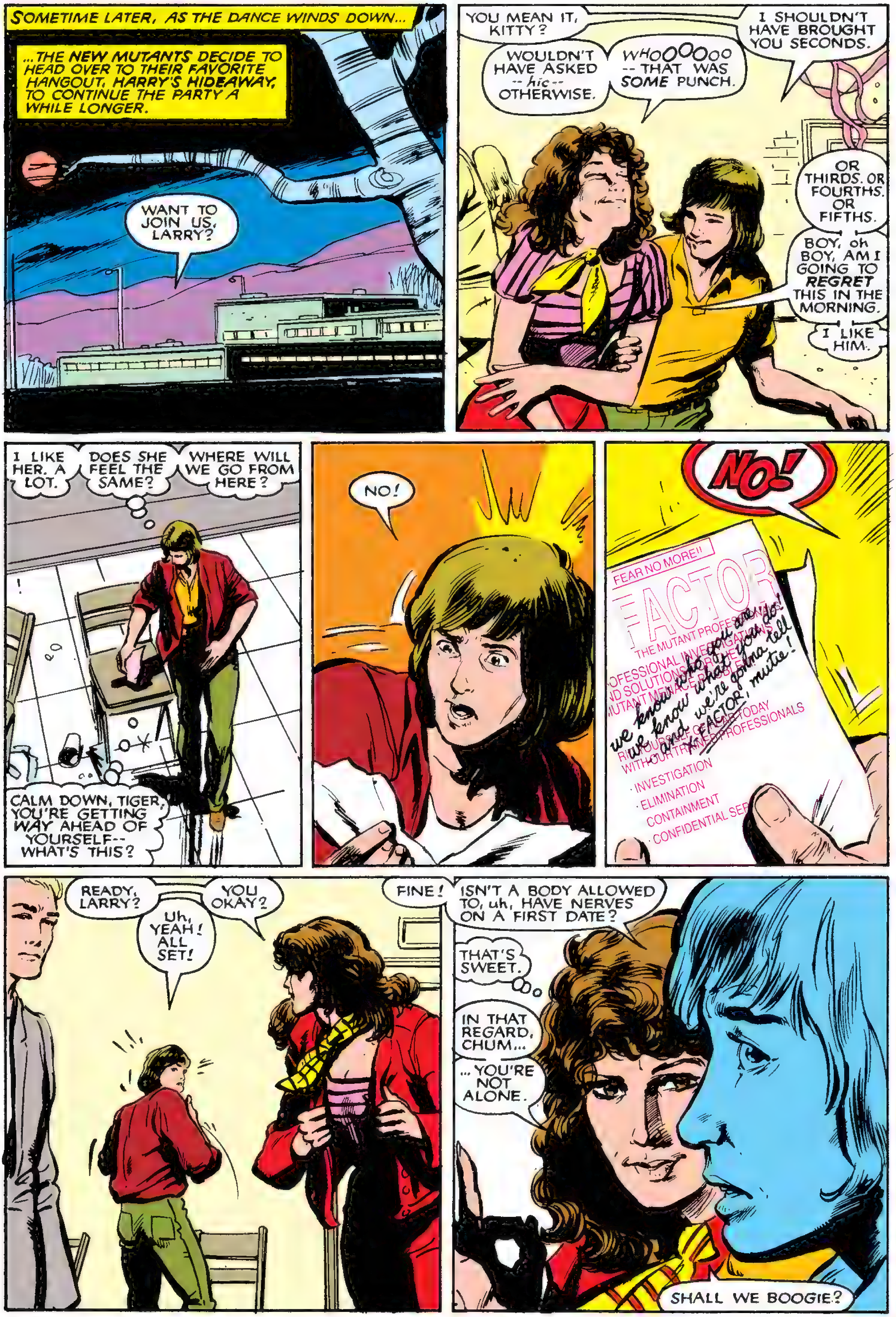

OBSERVATION: HUMAN GOT MESSAGE.
AND THEN SOME.
I NEVER REALIZED LETTING WARLOCK WATCH THAT BOWERY BOYS/BOGART/CAGNEY TRIPLE FEATURE WOULD COME IN SO HANDY.
PSSFFT!
MY HEROES.
QUERY: WILL CHIEFRIEND DANI MOONSTAR JOIN AND INSTRUCT SELF...
...IN MOTION RELATIONSHIPS...
...TO VARIABLE ENVIRONMENTAL HARMONICS?
A DANCE?
A DANCE.
THANKS, WARLOCK-- BUT NOT TONIGHT.
LEAVING SO SOON, DANIELLE?
I'M FEELING REALLY BEAT, SIR. I'M HEADING HOME TO THE SCHOOL.
GOODNIGHT, SIR. THANKS FOR INVITING US, MS. HOGARTH.
POOR MAGNETO. HE LOOKS AS OUT OF PLACE HERE AS I FEEL. I WONDER IF TAKING OVER AS OUR HEADMASTER IS MORE THAN HE BARGAINED FOR.
OAWAH!
MY POOR HEAD IS RINGING!
HOW CAN ANYONE STAND SUCH A NOISE?! THEY'LL ALL BE STONE DEAF BEFORE THEY'RE TWENTY! AND THAT CROWD--!
I HATE CROWDS.
COMES FROM GROWING UP ALONE, IN THE MOUNTAINS, I GUESS. TOO DARN SOLITARY BY NATURE.
ALSO, THERE WAS THE WEIRDEST VIBRATION IN THE AIR--
--REALLY SET MY NERVES ON EDGE.
LIKE LOOKING AT A CLEAR SKY...
...AND FEELING CERTAIN THAT A BAD STORM'S COMING.
Oh, WELL-- WHATEVER HAPPENS, WILL HAPPEN.
NOBODY'S ABOUT. NO LIGHTS WAY OUT HERE.
SHOULD BE SAFE ENOUGH TO WHISTLE DOWN BRIGHTWIND.

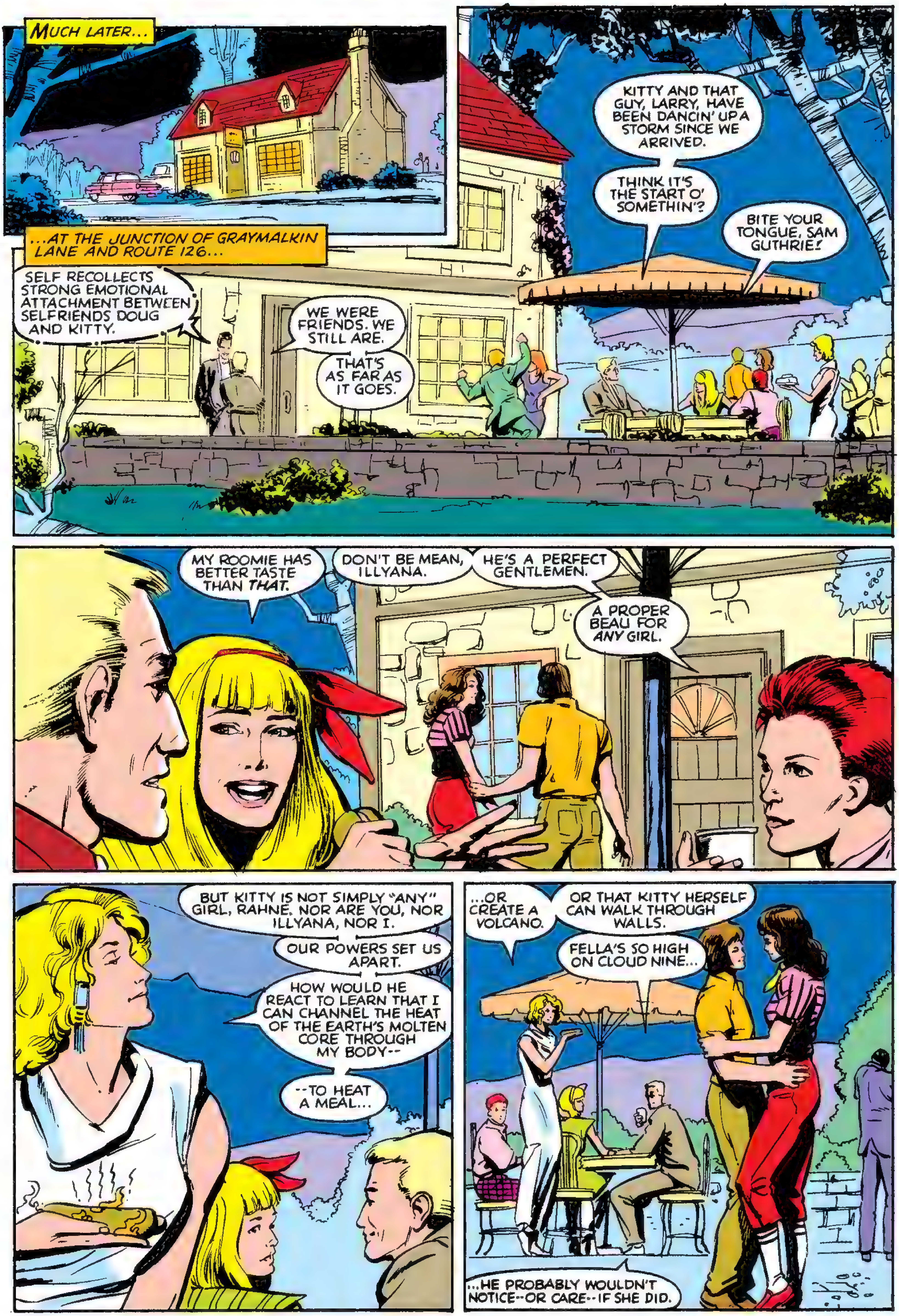

AND, IN ANSWER TO THE YOUNG CHEYENNE'S CALL...
EVERY TIME I SEE HIM, I GET SUCH A THRILL!
IT'S FANTASTIC ENOUGH BEING A *MUTANT,* PART OF A SCHOOL OF MUTANTS--THE BEST FRIENDS I'VE EVER HAD--CO-LEADER OF A TEAM OF NOVICE SUPER HEROES--
--BUT, AS WELL, TO BE THE CHOSEN RIDER OF ONE OF THE WINGED HORSES OF FABLED ASGARD, HOME OF THE NORSE GODS--!
I HAVE TO KEEP REMINDING MYSELF THAT THIS ISN'T SOME INCREDIBLE DREAM, IT'S *REAL!*
THE ONLY DRAWBACK IS THAT WITH BRIGHTWIND COMES THE POWER OF THE *VALKYRIOR*--THE *VALKYRIES*--
--TO SEE THOSE ABOUT TO DIE, AND, IF I WISH, FIGHT *DEATH* ITSELF TO SAVE THEM.
HECK, WITH MY ANCESTRY...
...I SHOULD BE USED TO HOPELESS CAUSES, AND IMPOSSIBLE ODDS.
WHAT'S THAT?!
X-FACTOR WE TAKE CARE OF MUTANTS THE OLD FASHIONED WAY-- *PERMANENTLY!!*
CUTE.
I SAW BUMPER STICKERS LIKE THAT IN COLORADO.
ONLY, INSTEAD OF "MUTANTS"...
...THEY SAID "*REDSKINS.*"
SOME THINGS--SOME ATTITUDES--NEVER CHANGE.
WOW.
Oh, WOW!
THAT GIRL!
THAT HORSE!!
I DON'T BELIEVE MY *EYES!*
DOES IT MEAN...
...SHE'S LIKE *ME?!?*

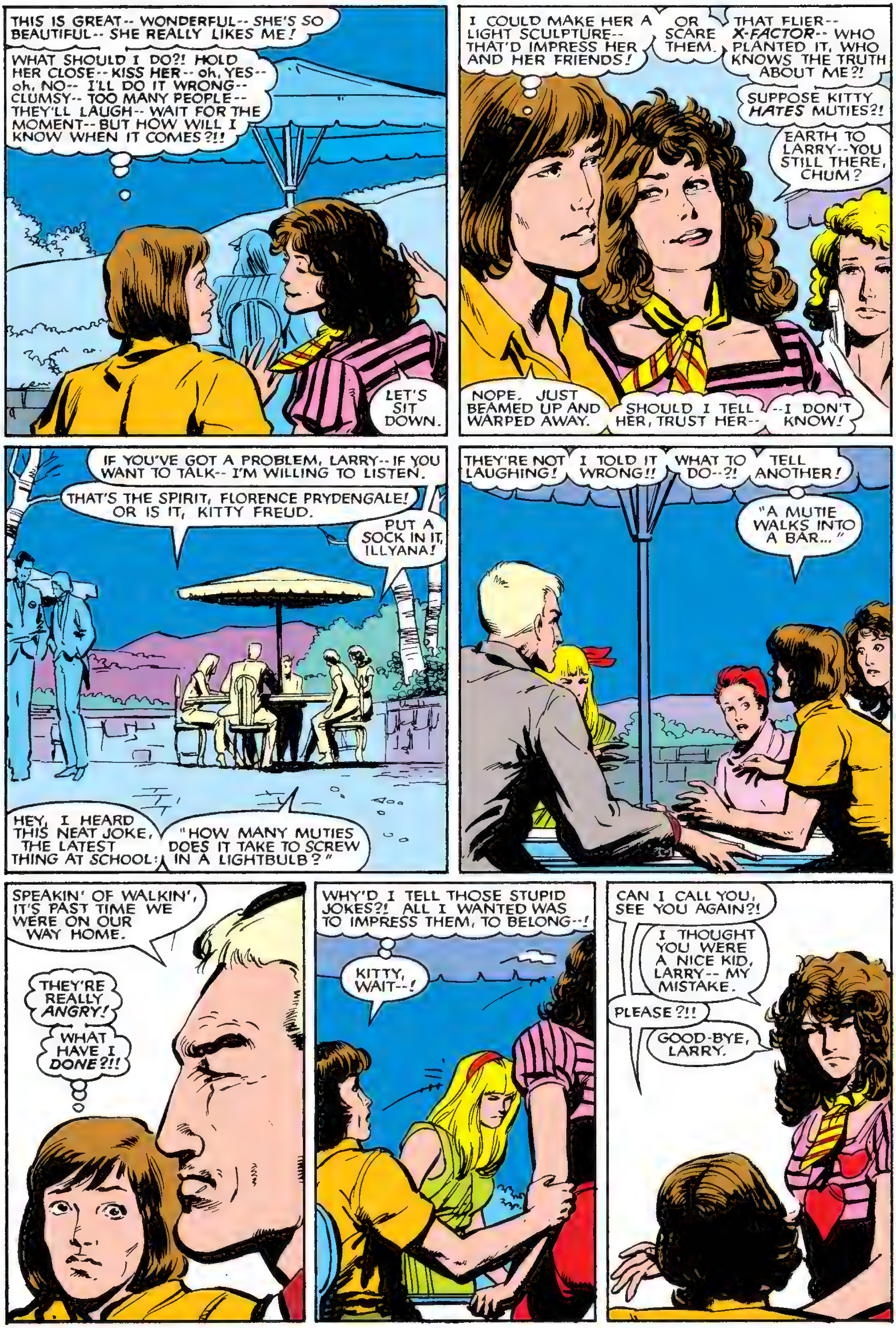

I ONLY SAW HER FOR A MOMENT.
MY **LIGHT SCULPTURES** DON'T DO HER ANYWHERE NEAR JUSTICE.
SHE'S FROM XAVIER'S SCHOOL. I WISH I KNEW HER NAME.
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOME WAY TO MEET...
I SAW A LIGHT, MICHAEL.
DANIELLE? IS THAT YOU?!
*MS. HOGARTH!*
WHY-- HELLO, LARRY.
MICHAEL, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE A RECENT TRANSFER STUDENT TO SALEM CENTER HIGH-- ***LARRY BODINE.*** LARRY, THIS IS ***MICHAEL XAVIER,*** HEADMASTER OF XAVIER'S SCHOOL. HE'S BEEN KIND ENOUGH TO HELP CHAPERONE THIS DANCE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE, LARRY?
*NOTHING!*
I MEAN, I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING WRONG--DRINKING OR DRUGS OR STUFF LIKE THAT--
--I JUST WANTED TO BE BY MYSELF.
BELIEVE ME, I UNDERSTAND HOW ROUGH THIS MUST BE FOR YOU--A NEW TOWN, NEW SCHOOL, HAVING TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS.
BUT YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY AND HIDE FOREVER.
SO MARCH BACK INSIDE, LARRY, AND REJOIN THE PARTY. WHO KNOWS, YOU MIGHT EVEN FIND YOURSELF A FRIEND.
ENJOYING YOURSELF, KITTY?
YUP. SURE THING, PROFESSOR, HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME, WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED IT FOR THE WORLD, CAN I GO HOME NOW?
PERHAPS, FIRST, YOUNG LADY...
...YOU WOULDN'T MIND SHARING A DANCE WITH LARRY.
WHY NOT?
PLEASE, DON'T PUT YOURSELF OUT. I DON'T WANT TO BE A BOTHER.
NO SWEAT. NO BOTHER. I'M KITTY PRYDE.
LARRY BODINE.

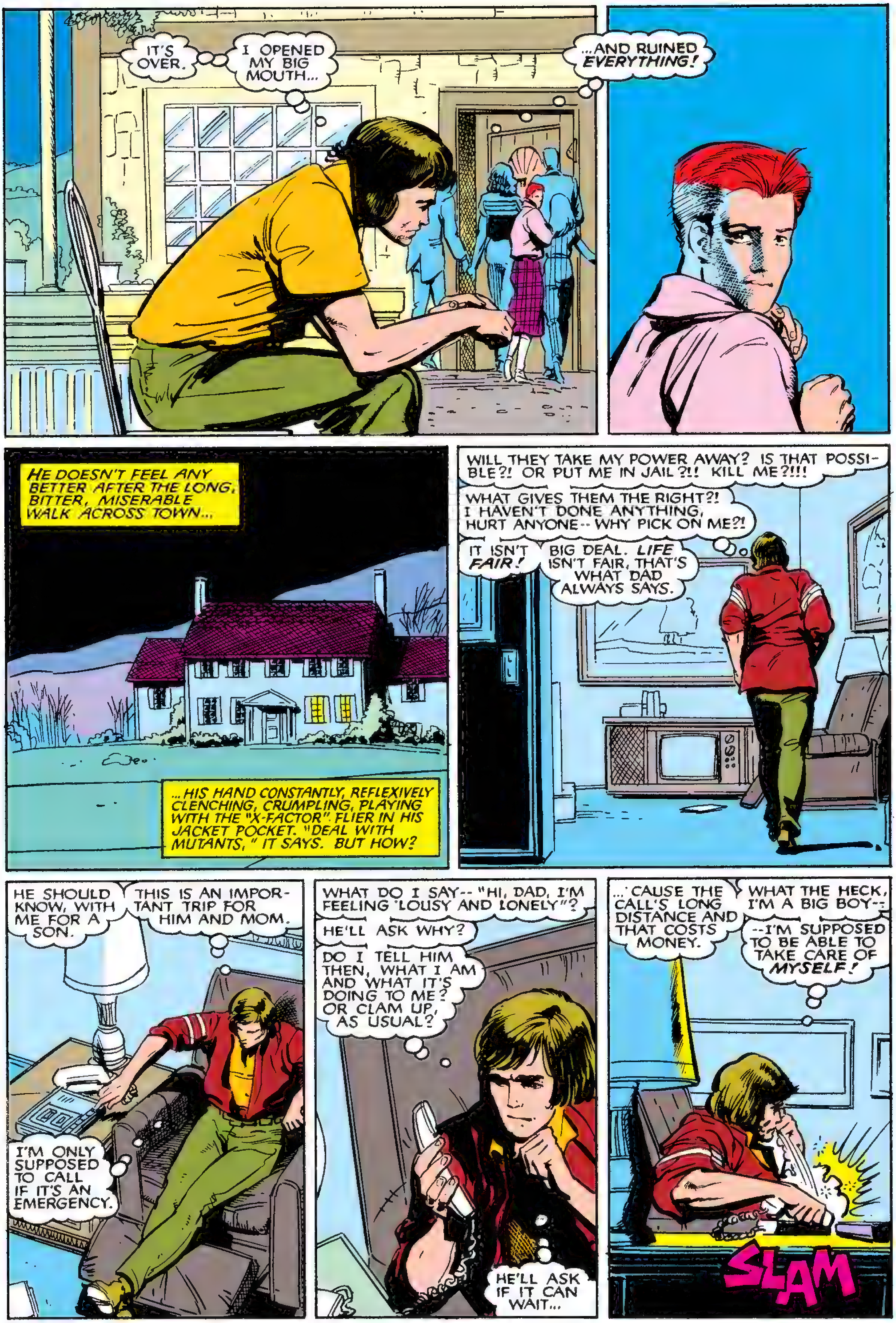

YOU HANDLED THAT WELL.
IT'S PARTLY KNACK, PARTLY EXPERIENCE.
TROUBLE IS, A PRINCIPAL USUALLY LEARNS MORE FROM THE FAILURES THAN THE SUCCESSES.
IT MUST DRIVE KITTY CRAZY TO SEE ALL THE BOYS FLOCK LIKE MOTHS TO HER ROOMMATE'S FLAME. SHE'S AS LOVELY AS ILLYANA, IN HER OWN WAY; IT'S JUST THEY'RE TOO BLIND TO SEE. THEIR LOSS. HOPEFULLY, LARRY'S GAIN.
TEENAGERS--I FEAR I'LL *NEVER* UNDERSTAND THEM.
GIVE YOURSELF A CHANCE. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.
Hah!
I REALLY ENVY THAT YOU'VE SO FEW STUDENTS, MICHAEL, THAT YOU'VE THE TIME TO GIVE EACH OF THEM INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I PAY THEM, IT NEVER SEEMS TO BE ENOUGH.
AND THERE'S ALWAYS THE FEAR THAT THE MOMENT YOU TURN AWAY IS THE ONE THEY NEED YOU MOST.
GROSS!
BOBBY Da COSTA HAS THE STYLE OF A DUMPSTER AND THE MORALS TO MATCH!
HEY, *I* WOULDN'T PULL ANYTHING LIKE THAT!
*I* SHOULD HAVE SUCH FUN!
JUST MY LUCK.
CHILL OUT, LARRY. I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT YOU.
I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN--!
FORGET IT.
LIKE SOME PUNCH?
SURE.
REALLY STUPID. CLASSIC JERK. PUT MY FOOT IN IT THAT TIME, FOR SURE! BUT HOW TO START AGAIN, WITHOUT MAKING THINGS WORSE--? BE SIMPLER JUST TO DIE!
HE'S NICE.

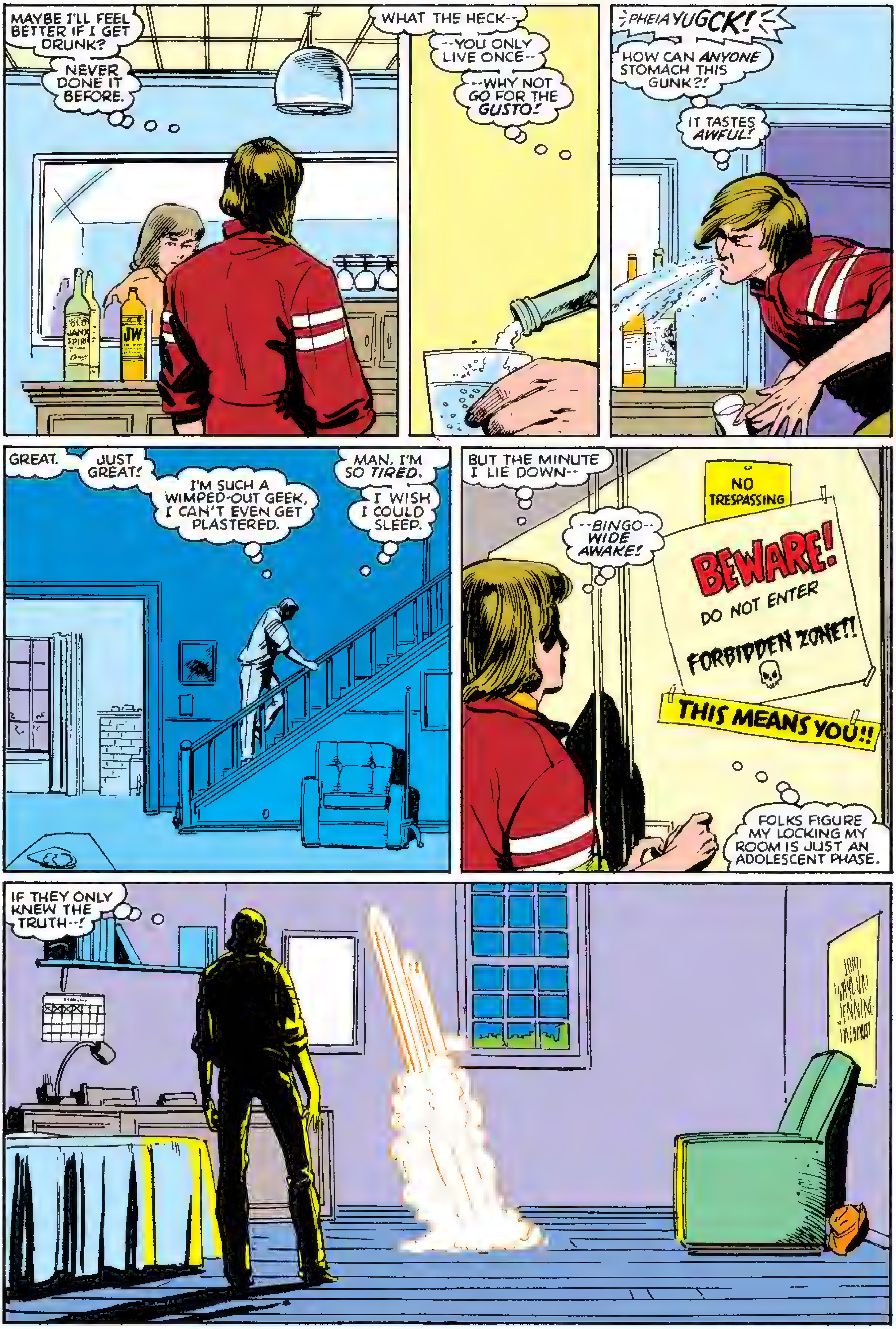

SHE'S NICE.
GOT TO WATCH MY ACT, I DON'T WANT TO BLOW THIS!
HOW MANY MUTIES DOES IT TAKE TO SCREW IN A LIGHTBULB?
THAT'S SO *OLD!*
MUTIES DON'T *NEED* LIGHTBULBS, FOOL, THEY GLOW IN THE DARK!
CAREFUL WITH THAT BOTTLE--
--OR EAGLE-EYE HOGARTH'LL SEE YOU!
BET *SHE'S* A MUTIE!
YEAH--SHE'S UGLY ENOUGH!
Y'KNOW, BODINE, YOU'RE SUCH A RAT-FACED, GEEKY LITTLE DWEEB, IT'S GOTTA BE THAT *YOU'RE* A MUTIE.
AM I RIGHT, GANG, OR WHAT?!
I AM NOT! I AM NOT!
DON'T SAY THAT. DON'T CALL ME THAT--TAKE IT BACK--IT ISN'T TRUE!
ANYTHING THE MATTER, LARRY?
*Uh,* NO--ONLY THE GUYS MOUTHING OFF.
I, *uh,* THINK THEY SPIKED THE PUNCH.
WE SURE HIT A NERVE.
HEY, I GOT AN IDEA! LET'S THREATEN BODINE WITH THOSE PROFESSIONAL MUTIE HUNTERS, *X-FACTOR!!*
GIVE THE KID A BREAK, RICK.
RELAX, SHIRLEY, WE'RE NOT ACTUALLY GONNA CALL THEM, ONLY PRETEND TO.
HIS REACTION WAS SO EXTREME...
...MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T FOOL WITH HIM?
YOU GONNA WIMP OUT ON US, BABE?
TRUST ME, NOTHIN'S GONNA HAPPEN--
--EXCEPT THAT WE'RE GONNA HAVE US SOME LAUGHS, AT BODINE'S EXPENSE. WHERE'S THE HARM?!

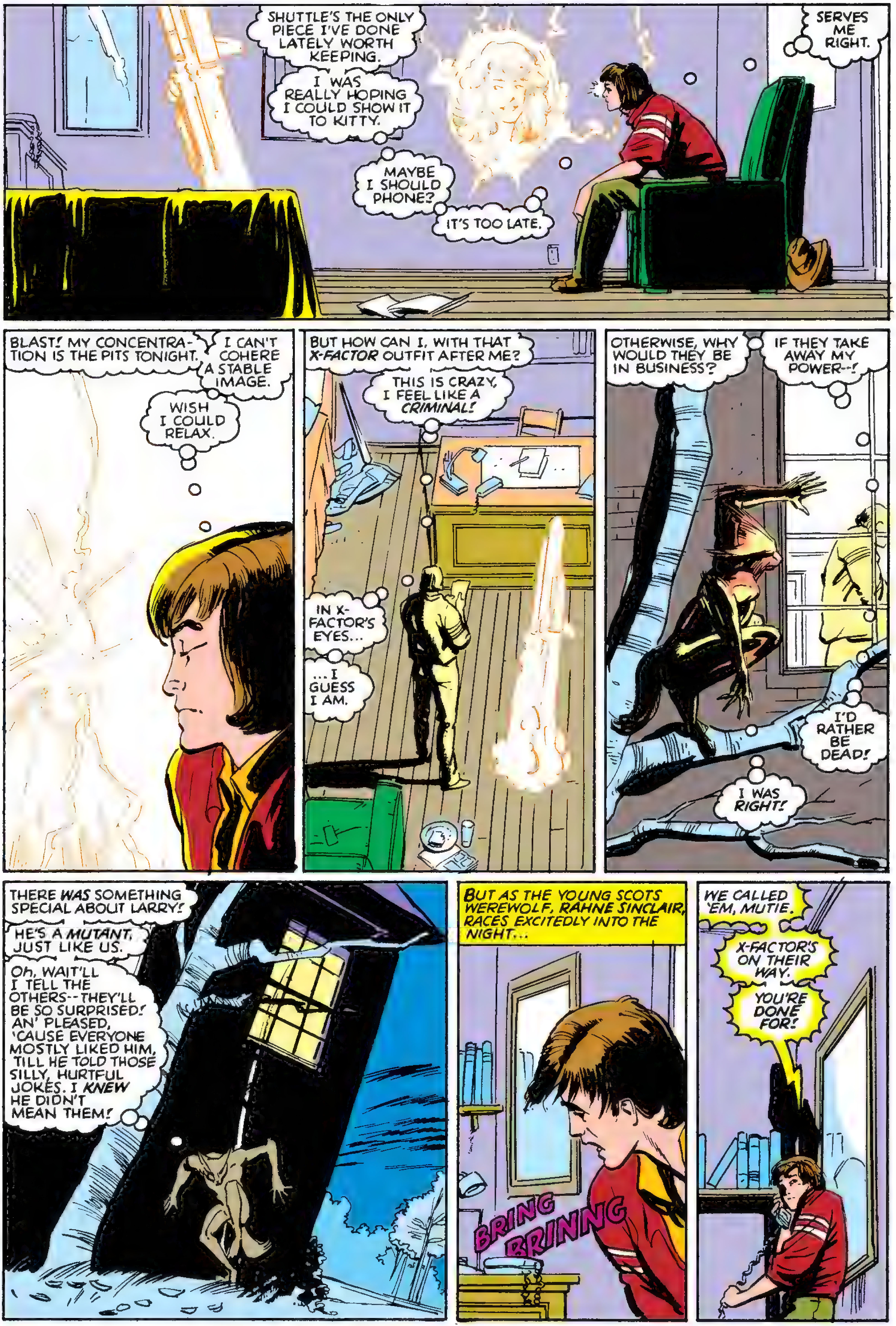

SOMETIME LATER, AS THE DANCE WINDS DOWN...
...THE NEW MUTANTS DECIDE TO HEAD OVER TO THEIR FAVORITE HANGOUT, HARRY'S HIDEAWAY, TO CONTINUE THE PARTY A WHILE LONGER.
WANT TO JOIN US, LARRY?
YOU MEAN IT, KITTY?
I SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT YOU SECONDS.
WOULDN'T HAVE ASKED -- hic -- OTHERWISE.
WHOOOOOO -- THAT WAS SOME PUNCH.
OR THIRDS. OR FOURTHS. OR FIFTHS.
BOY, oh BOY, AM I GOING TO REGRET THIS IN THE MORNING.
I LIKE HIM.
I LIKE HER. A LOT.
DOES SHE FEEL THE SAME?
WHERE WILL WE GO FROM HERE?
CALM DOWN, TIGER, YOU'RE GETTING WAY AHEAD OF YOURSELF-- WHAT'S THIS?
NO!
NO!
FEAR NO MORE!!
FACTOR
THE MUTANT PROFESSIONALS
PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS
SOLUTIONS
MUTANT MENACE
TODAY
PROFESSIONALS
INVESTIGATION
ELIMINATION
CONTAINMENT
CONFIDENTIAL SER
we know who you are, we know what you do! and we're gonna tell X-FACTOR, mutie!
READY, LARRY?
YOU OKAY?
Uh, YEAH! ALL SET!
FINE!
ISN'T A BODY ALLOWED TO, uh, HAVE NERVES ON A FIRST DATE?
THAT'S SWEET.
IN THAT REGARD, CHUM...
...YOU'RE NOT ALONE.
SHALL WE BOOGIE?

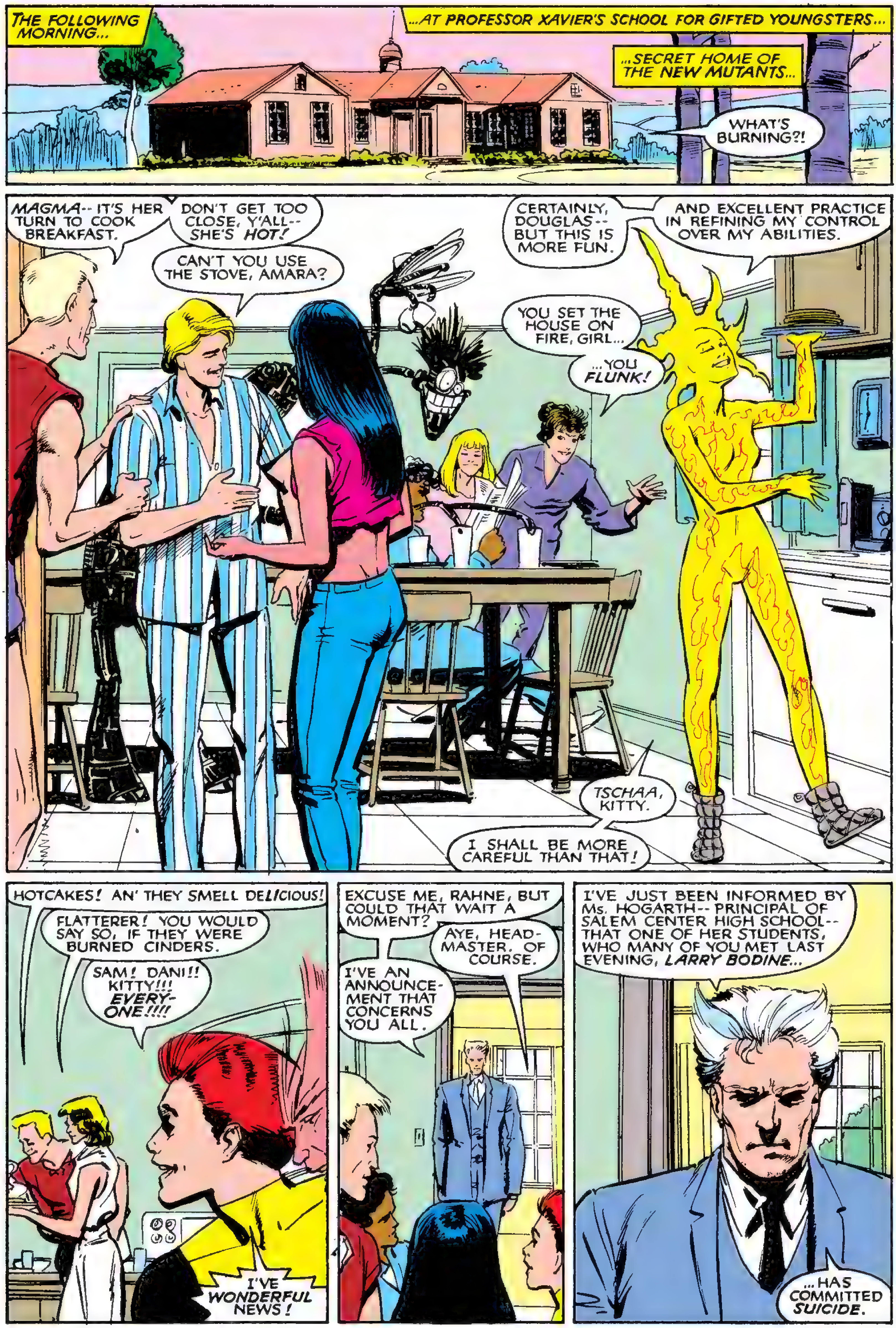

MUCH LATER...
...AT THE JUNCTION OF GRAYMALKIN LANE AND ROUTE 126...
SELF RECOLLECTS STRONG EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT BETWEEN SELFRIENDS DOUG AND KITTY.
WE WERE FRIENDS. WE STILL ARE.
THAT'S AS FAR AS IT GOES.
KITTY AND THAT GUY, LARRY, HAVE BEEN DANCIN' UP A STORM SINCE WE ARRIVED.
THINK IT'S THE START O' SOMETHIN'?
BITE YOUR TONGUE, SAM GUTHRIE!
MY ROOMIE HAS BETTER TASTE THAN *THAT*.
DON'T BE MEAN, ILLYANA.
HE'S A PERFECT GENTLEMEN.
A PROPER BEAU FOR *ANY* GIRL.
BUT KITTY IS NOT SIMPLY "ANY" GIRL, RAHNE. NOR ARE YOU, NOR ILLYANA, NOR I.
OUR POWERS SET US APART.
HOW WOULD HE REACT TO LEARN THAT I CAN CHANNEL THE HEAT OF THE EARTH'S MOLTEN CORE THROUGH MY BODY--
--TO HEAT A MEAL...
...OR CREATE A VOLCANO.
OR THAT KITTY HERSELF CAN WALK THROUGH WALLS.
FELLA'S SO HIGH ON CLOUD NINE...
...HE PROBABLY WOULDN'T NOTICE--OR CARE--IF SHE DID.

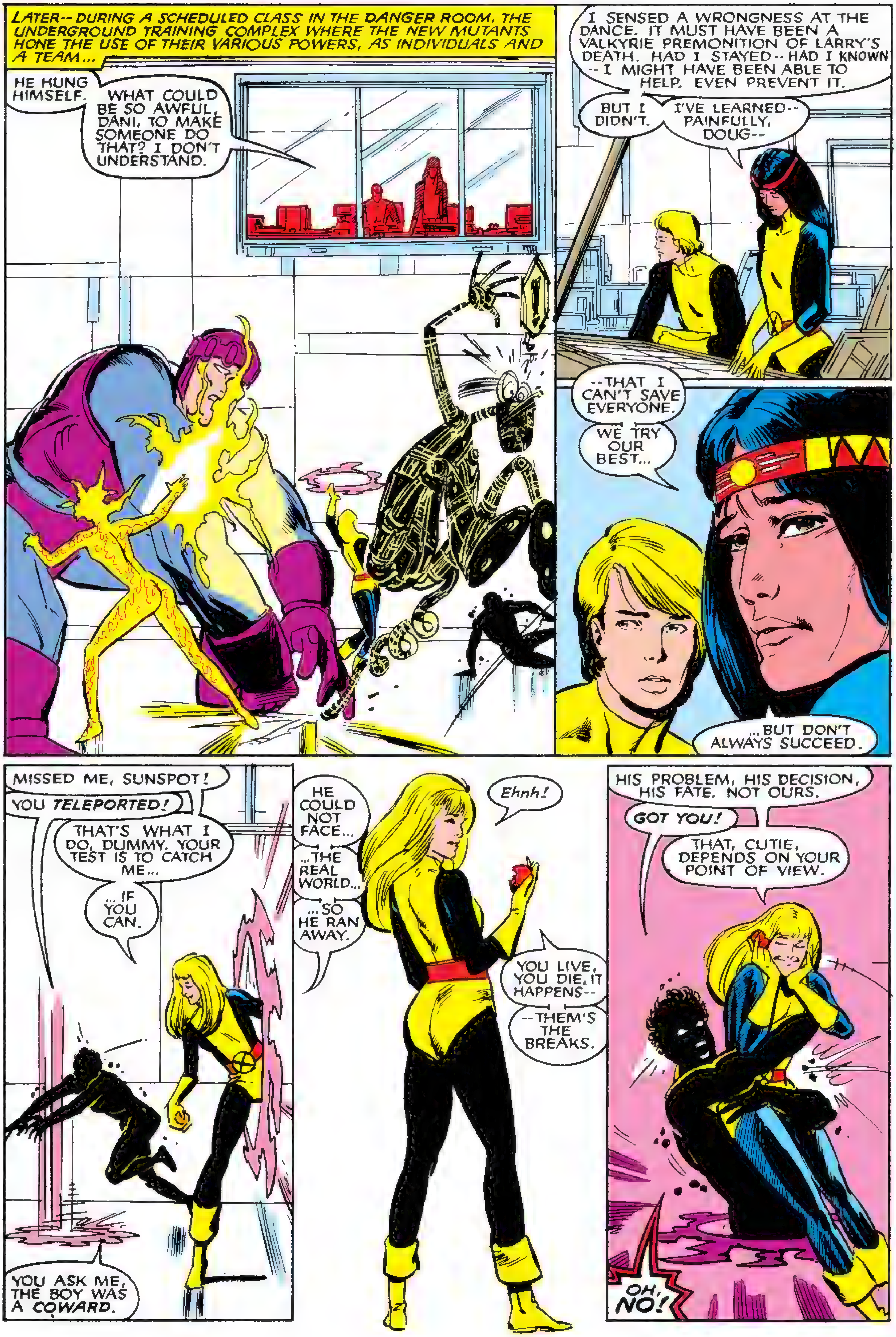

THIS IS GREAT-- WONDERFUL-- SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL-- SHE REALLY LIKES ME!
WHAT SHOULD I DO?! HOLD HER CLOSE-- KISS HER-- oh, YES-- oh, NO-- I'LL DO IT WRONG-- CLUMSY-- TOO MANY PEOPLE-- THEY'LL LAUGH-- WAIT FOR THE MOMENT-- BUT HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT COMES?!!
LET'S SIT DOWN.
I COULD MAKE HER A LIGHT SCULPTURE-- THAT'D IMPRESS HER AND HER FRIENDS!
OR SCARE THEM.
THAT FLIER-- X-FACTOR-- WHO PLANTED IT, WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT ME?!
SUPPOSE KITTY HATES MUTIES?!
EARTH TO LARRY--YOU STILL THERE, CHUM?
NOPE. JUST BEAMED UP AND WARPED AWAY.
SHOULD I TELL HER, TRUST HER--
--I DON'T KNOW!
IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM, LARRY-- IF YOU WANT TO TALK-- I'M WILLING TO LISTEN.
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, FLORENCE PRYDENGALE! OR IS IT, KITTY FREUD.
PUT A SOCK IN IT, ILLYANA!
HEY, I HEARD THIS NEAT JOKE, THE LATEST THING AT SCHOOL:
"HOW MANY MUTIES DOES IT TAKE TO SCREW IN A LIGHTBULB?"
THEY'RE NOT LAUGHING!
I TOLD IT WRONG!!
WHAT TO DO--?!
TELL ANOTHER!
"A MUTIE WALKS INTO A BAR..."
SPEAKIN' OF WALKIN', IT'S PAST TIME WE WERE ON OUR WAY HOME.
THEY'RE REALLY ANGRY!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!!
WHY'D I TELL THOSE STUPID JOKES?! ALL I WANTED WAS TO IMPRESS THEM, TO BELONG--!
KITTY, WAIT--!
CAN I CALL YOU, SEE YOU AGAIN?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE A NICE KID, LARRY-- MY MISTAKE.
PLEASE?!!
GOOD-BYE, LARRY.

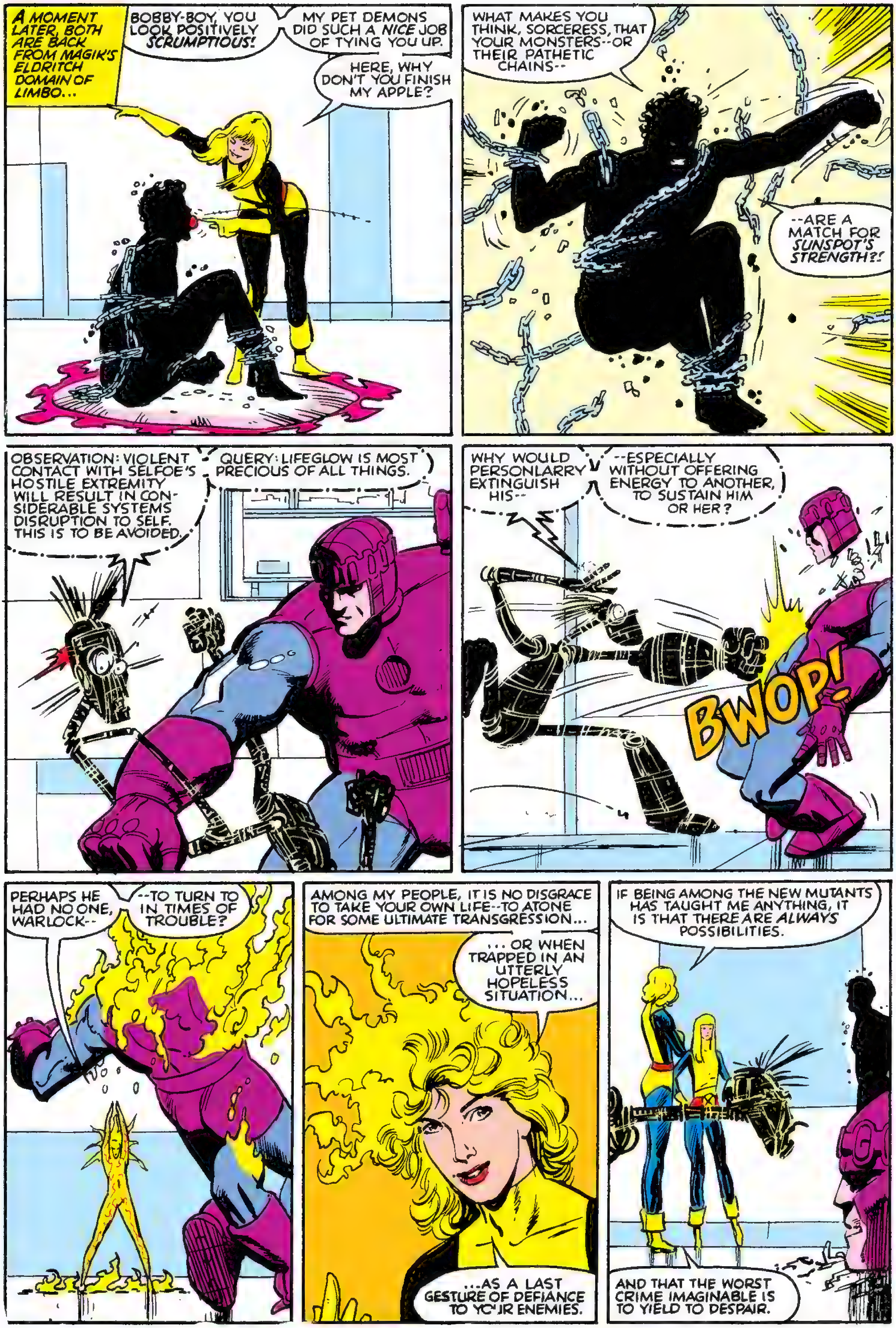

IT'S OVER.
I OPENED MY BIG MOUTH...
...AND RUINED *EVERYTHING!*
*HE DOESN'T FEEL ANY BETTER AFTER THE LONG, BITTER, MISERABLE WALK ACROSS TOWN...*
*...HIS HAND CONSTANTLY, REFLEXIVELY CLENCHING, CRUMPLING, PLAYING WITH THE "X-FACTOR" FLIER IN HIS JACKET POCKET. "DEAL WITH MUTANTS," IT SAYS. BUT HOW?*
WILL THEY TAKE MY POWER AWAY? IS THAT POSSIBLE?! OR PUT ME IN JAIL?!! KILL ME?!!!
WHAT GIVES THEM THE RIGHT?! I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING, HURT ANYONE-- WHY PICK ON ME?!
IT ISN'T *FAIR!*
BIG DEAL. *LIFE* ISN'T FAIR, THAT'S WHAT DAD ALWAYS SAYS.
HE SHOULD KNOW, WITH ME FOR A SON.
THIS IS AN IMPORTANT TRIP FOR HIM AND MOM.
I'M ONLY SUPPOSED TO CALL IF IT'S AN EMERGENCY.
WHAT DO I SAY-- "HI, DAD, I'M FEELING 'LOUSY AND LONELY'"?
HE'LL ASK WHY?
DO I TELL HIM THEN, WHAT I AM AND WHAT IT'S DOING TO ME? OR CLAM UP, AS USUAL?
HE'LL ASK IF IT CAN WAIT...
...'CAUSE THE CALL'S LONG DISTANCE AND THAT COSTS MONEY.
WHAT THE HECK, I'M A BIG BOY--
--I'M SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF *MYSELF!*
SLAM

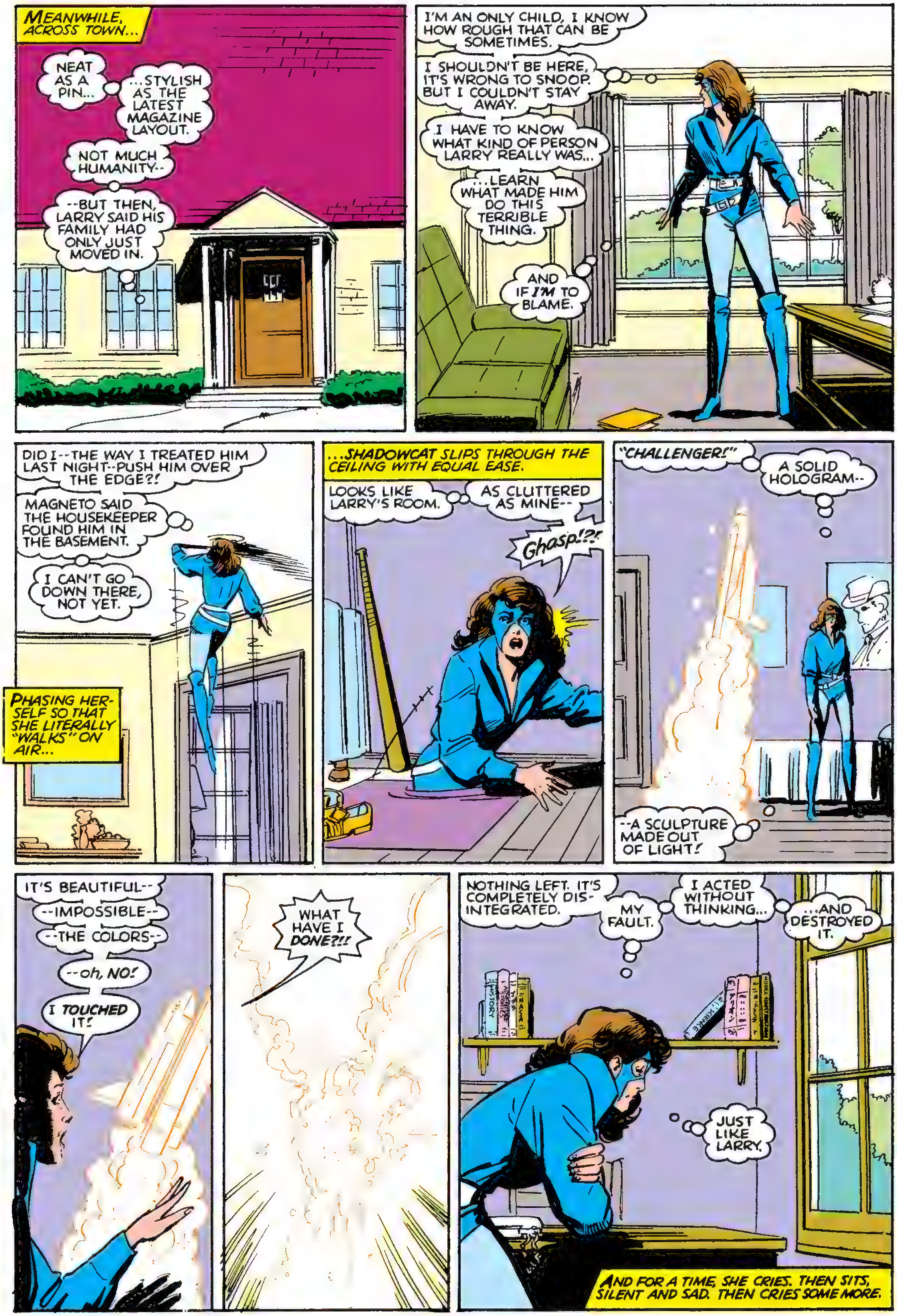

MAYBE I'LL FEEL BETTER IF I GET DRUNK?
NEVER DONE IT BEFORE.
OLD JANX SPIRIT
JW
WHAT THE HECK--
--YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE--
--WHY NOT GO FOR THE *GUSTO!*
PHEIA YUGCK!
HOW CAN *ANYONE* STOMACH THIS GUNK?!
IT TASTES *AWFUL!*
GREAT.
JUST GREAT!
I'M SUCH A WIMPED-OUT GEEK, I CAN'T EVEN GET PLASTERED.
MAN, I'M SO *TIRED.*
I WISH I COULD SLEEP.
BUT THE MINUTE I LIE DOWN--
--BINGO-- *WIDE AWAKE!*
NO TRESPASSING
BEWARE!
DO NOT ENTER
FORBIDDEN ZONE!!
THIS MEANS YOU!!
FOLKS FIGURE MY LOCKING MY ROOM IS JUST AN ADOLESCENT PHASE.
IF THEY ONLY KNEW THE TRUTH--!
WAYLON
JENNING

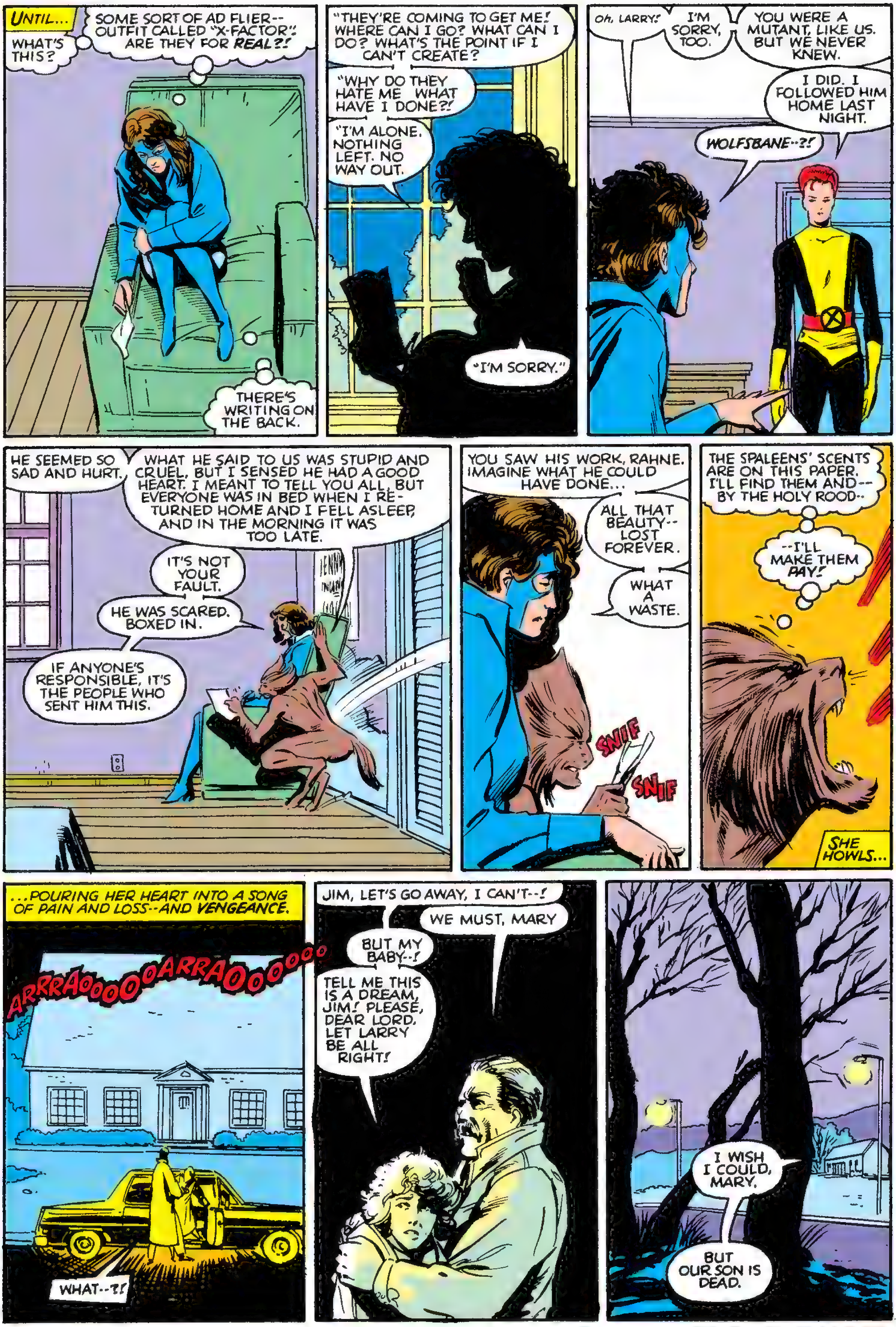

SHUTTLE'S THE ONLY PIECE I'VE DONE LATELY WORTH KEEPING.
I WAS REALLY HOPING I COULD SHOW IT TO KITTY.
MAYBE I SHOULD PHONE?
IT'S TOO LATE.
SERVES ME RIGHT.
BLAST! MY CONCENTRATION IS THE PITS TONIGHT.
I CAN'T COHERE A STABLE IMAGE.
WISH I COULD RELAX.
BUT HOW CAN I, WITH THAT *X-FACTOR* OUTFIT AFTER ME?
THIS IS CRAZY, I FEEL LIKE A *CRIMINAL!*
IN X-FACTOR'S EYES...
...I GUESS I AM.
OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD THEY BE IN BUSINESS?
IF THEY TAKE AWAY MY POWER--!
I'D RATHER BE DEAD!
I WAS *RIGHT!*
THERE *WAS* SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT LARRY!
HE'S A *MUTANT,* JUST LIKE US.
*Oh,* WAIT'LL I TELL THE OTHERS--THEY'LL BE SO SURPRISED! AN' PLEASED, 'CAUSE EVERYONE MOSTLY LIKED HIM, TILL HE TOLD THOSE SILLY, HURTFUL JOKES. I *KNEW* HE DIDN'T MEAN THEM!
BUT AS THE YOUNG SCOTS WEREWOLF, RAHNE SINCLAIR, RACES EXCITEDLY INTO THE NIGHT...
BRING
BRINNG
WE CALLED 'EM, MUTIE.
X-FACTOR'S ON THEIR WAY.
YOU'RE DONE FOR!

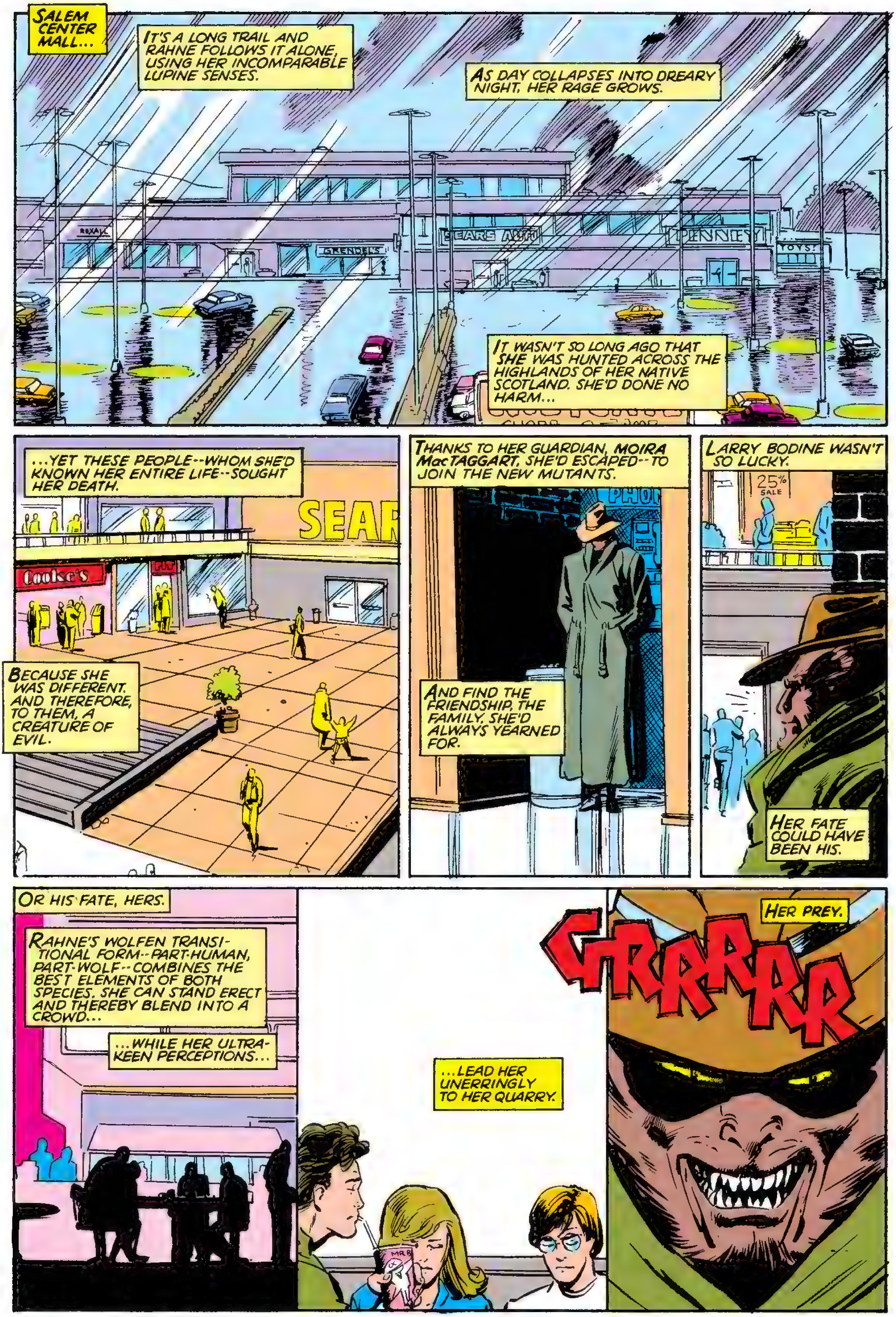

THE FOLLOWING MORNING...
...AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
...SECRET HOME OF THE NEW MUTANTS...
WHAT'S BURNING?!
MAGMA-- IT'S HER TURN TO COOK BREAKFAST.
DON'T GET TOO CLOSE, Y'ALL-- SHE'S *HOT!*
CAN'T YOU USE THE STOVE, AMARA?
CERTAINLY, DOUGLAS-- BUT THIS IS MORE FUN.
AND EXCELLENT PRACTICE IN REFINING MY CONTROL OVER MY ABILITIES.
YOU SET THE HOUSE ON FIRE, GIRL...
...YOU *FLUNK!*
TSCHAA, KITTY.
I SHALL BE MORE CAREFUL THAN THAT!
HOTCAKES! AN' THEY SMELL DE*LI*CIOUS!
FLATTERER! YOU WOULD SAY SO, IF THEY WERE BURNED CINDERS.
SAM! DANI!! KITTY!!! *EVERY-ONE!!!!*
I'VE *WONDERFUL* NEWS!
EXCUSE ME, RAHNE, BUT COULD THAT WAIT A MOMENT?
AYE, HEADMASTER, OF COURSE.
I'VE AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT CONCERNS YOU ALL.
I'VE JUST BEEN INFORMED BY Ms. HOGARTH-- PRINCIPAL OF SALEM CENTER HIGH SCHOOL-- THAT ONE OF HER STUDENTS, WHO MANY OF YOU MET LAST EVENING, *LARRY BODINE*...
...HAS COMMITTED *SUICIDE*.


LATER-- DURING A SCHEDULED CLASS IN THE DANGER ROOM, THE UNDERGROUND TRAINING COMPLEX WHERE THE NEW MUTANTS HONE THE USE OF THEIR VARIOUS POWERS, AS INDIVIDUALS AND A TEAM...
HE HUNG HIMSELF.
WHAT COULD BE SO AWFUL, DANI, TO MAKE SOMEONE DO THAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I SENSED A WRONGNESS AT THE DANCE. IT MUST HAVE BEEN A VALKYRIE PREMONITION OF LARRY'S DEATH. HAD I STAYED--HAD I KNOWN --I MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HELP. EVEN PREVENT IT.
BUT I DIDN'T.
I'VE LEARNED-- PAINFULLY, DOUG--
--THAT I CAN'T SAVE EVERYONE.
WE TRY OUR BEST...
...BUT DON'T ALWAYS SUCCEED.
MISSED ME, SUNSPOT!
YOU TELEPORTED!
THAT'S WHAT I DO, DUMMY. YOUR TEST IS TO CATCH ME...
...IF YOU CAN.
YOU ASK ME, THE BOY WAS A COWARD.
HE COULD NOT FACE...
...THE REAL WORLD...
...SO HE RAN AWAY.
Ehnh!
YOU LIVE, YOU DIE, IT HAPPENS--
--THEM'S THE BREAKS.
HIS PROBLEM, HIS DECISION, HIS FATE. NOT OURS.
GOT YOU!
THAT, CUTIE, DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW.
OH, NO!

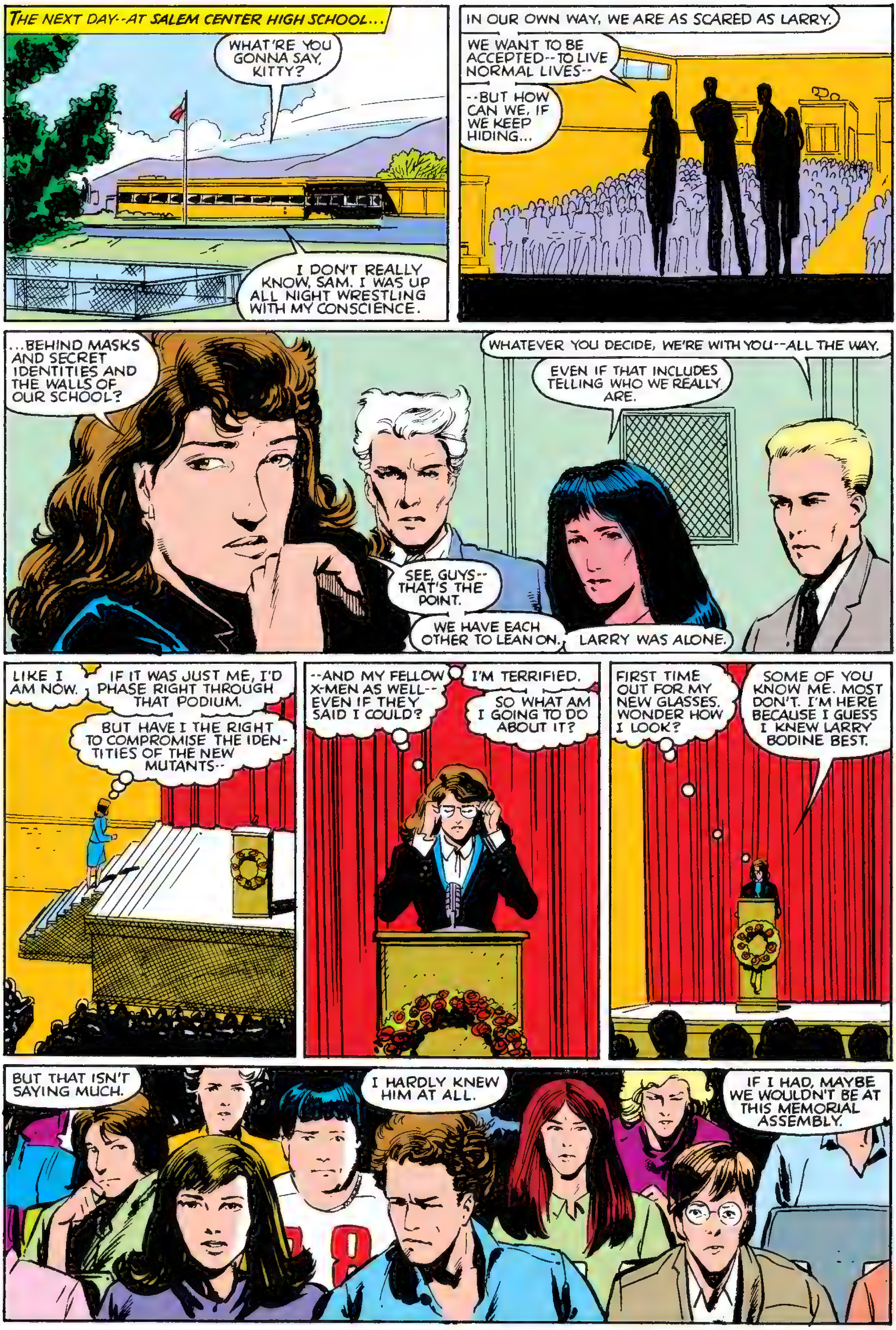

A MOMENT LATER, BOTH ARE BACK FROM MAGIK'S ELDRITCH DOMAIN OF LIMBO...
BOBBY-BOY, YOU LOOK POSITIVELY *SCRUMPTIOUS!*
MY PET DEMONS DID SUCH A *NICE* JOB OF TYING YOU UP.
HERE, WHY DON'T YOU FINISH MY APPLE?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK, SORCERESS, THAT YOUR MONSTERS--OR THEIR PATHETIC CHAINS--
--ARE A MATCH FOR *SUNSPOT'S STRENGTH?!*
OBSERVATION: VIOLENT CONTACT WITH SELFOE'S HOSTILE EXTREMITY WILL RESULT IN CONSIDERABLE SYSTEMS DISRUPTION TO SELF. THIS IS TO BE AVOIDED.
QUERY: LIFEGLOW IS MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL THINGS.
WHY WOULD PERSONLARRY EXTINGUISH HIS--
--ESPECIALLY WITHOUT OFFERING ENERGY TO ANOTHER, TO SUSTAIN HIM OR HER?
BWOP!
PERHAPS HE HAD NO ONE, WARLOCK--
--TO TURN TO IN TIMES OF TROUBLE?
AMONG MY PEOPLE, IT IS NO DISGRACE TO TAKE YOUR OWN LIFE--TO ATONE FOR SOME ULTIMATE TRANSGRESSION...
...OR WHEN TRAPPED IN AN UTTERLY HOPELESS SITUATION...
...AS A LAST GESTURE OF DEFIANCE TO YOUR ENEMIES.
IF BEING AMONG THE NEW MUTANTS HAS TAUGHT ME ANYTHING, IT IS THAT THERE ARE *ALWAYS* POSSIBILITIES.
AND THAT THE WORST CRIME IMAGINABLE IS TO YIELD TO DESPAIR.

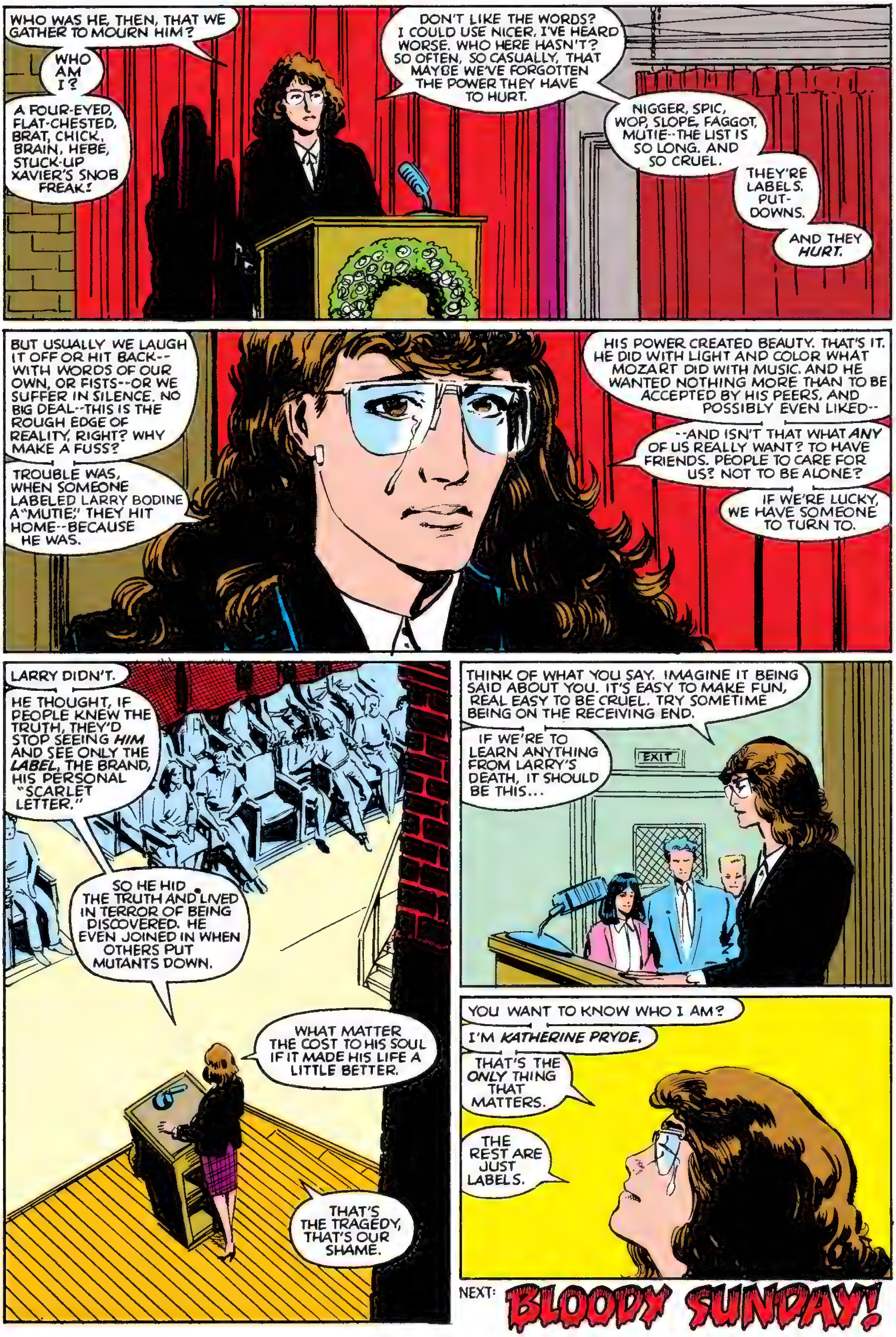

MEANWHILE, ACROSS TOWN...
NEAT AS A PIN...
...STYLISH AS THE LATEST MAGAZINE LAYOUT.
NOT MUCH HUMANITY--
--BUT THEN, LARRY SAID HIS FAMILY HAD ONLY JUST MOVED IN.
I'M AN ONLY CHILD, I KNOW HOW ROUGH THAT CAN BE SOMETIMES.
I SHOULDN'T BE HERE, IT'S WRONG TO SNOOP. BUT I COULDN'T STAY AWAY.
I HAVE TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON LARRY REALLY WAS...
...LEARN WHAT MADE HIM DO THIS TERRIBLE THING.
AND IF I'M TO BLAME.
DID I--THE WAY I TREATED HIM LAST NIGHT--PUSH HIM OVER THE EDGE?!
MAGNETO SAID THE HOUSEKEEPER FOUND HIM IN THE BASEMENT.
I CAN'T GO DOWN THERE, NOT YET.
PHASING HERSELF SO THAT SHE LITERALLY "WALKS" ON AIR...
...SHADOWCAT SLIPS THROUGH THE CEILING WITH EQUAL EASE.
LOOKS LIKE LARRY'S ROOM.
AS CLUTTERED AS MINE--
Ghasp!?!
"CHALLENGER!"
A SOLID HOLOGRAM--
--A SCULPTURE MADE OUT OF LIGHT!
IT'S BEAUTIFUL--
--IMPOSSIBLE--
--THE COLORS--
--oh, NO!
I TOUCHED IT!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!!
NOTHING LEFT. IT'S COMPLETELY DISINTEGRATED.
MY FAULT.
I ACTED WITHOUT THINKING...
...AND DESTROYED IT.
JUST LIKE LARRY.
AND FOR A TIME, SHE CRIES. THEN SITS, SILENT AND SAD. THEN CRIES SOME MORE.


UNTIL...
WHAT'S THIS?
SOME SORT OF AD FLIER--OUTFIT CALLED "X-FACTOR". ARE THEY FOR REAL?!
THERE'S WRITING ON THE BACK.
"THEY'RE COMING TO GET ME! WHERE CAN I GO? WHAT CAN I DO? WHAT'S THE POINT IF I CAN'T CREATE?
"WHY DO THEY HATE ME WHAT HAVE I DONE?!
"I'M ALONE. NOTHING LEFT. NO WAY OUT.
"I'M SORRY."
Oh, LARRY!
I'M SORRY, TOO.
YOU WERE A MUTANT, LIKE US. BUT WE NEVER KNEW.
I DID. I FOLLOWED HIM HOME LAST NIGHT.
WOLFSBANE--?!
HE SEEMED SO SAD AND HURT.
WHAT HE SAID TO US WAS STUPID AND CRUEL, BUT I SENSED HE HAD A GOOD HEART. I MEANT TO TELL YOU ALL, BUT EVERYONE WAS IN BED WHEN I RETURNED HOME AND I FELL ASLEEP, AND IN THE MORNING IT WAS TOO LATE.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
HE WAS SCARED. BOXED IN.
IF ANYONE'S RESPONSIBLE, IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO SENT HIM THIS.
YOU SAW HIS WORK, RAHNE. IMAGINE WHAT HE COULD HAVE DONE...
ALL THAT BEAUTY--LOST FOREVER.
WHAT A WASTE.
SNIF
SNIF
THE SPALEENS' SCENTS ARE ON THIS PAPER. I'LL FIND THEM AND--BY THE HOLY ROOD--
--I'LL MAKE THEM PAY!
SHE HOWLS...
...POURING HER HEART INTO A SONG OF PAIN AND LOSS--AND VENGEANCE.
ARRRAOOOOOOARRAOOOOOOO
WHAT--?!
JIM, LET'S GO AWAY, I CAN'T--!
WE MUST, MARY
BUT MY BABY--!
TELL ME THIS IS A DREAM, JIM! PLEASE, DEAR LORD, LET LARRY BE ALL RIGHT!
I WISH I COULD, MARY.
BUT OUR SON IS DEAD.


SALEM CENTER MALL...
IT'S A LONG TRAIL AND RAHNE FOLLOWS IT ALONE, USING HER INCOMPARABLE LUPINE SENSES.
AS DAY COLLAPSES INTO DREARY NIGHT, HER RAGE GROWS.
REXALL
GRENDEL'S
SEARS AUTO
PENNEY
TOYS
IT WASN'T SO LONG AGO THAT SHE WAS HUNTED ACROSS THE HIGHLANDS OF HER NATIVE SCOTLAND. SHE'D DONE NO HARM...
...YET THESE PEOPLE--WHOM SHE'D KNOWN HER ENTIRE LIFE--SOUGHT HER DEATH.
SEAR
Cookse's
BECAUSE SHE WAS DIFFERENT. AND THEREFORE, TO THEM, A CREATURE OF EVIL.
THANKS TO HER GUARDIAN, MOIRA MacTAGGART, SHE'D ESCAPED--TO JOIN THE NEW MUTANTS.
PHO
AND FIND THE FRIENDSHIP, THE FAMILY, SHE'D ALWAYS YEARNED FOR.
LARRY BODINE WASN'T SO LUCKY.
25% SALE
HER FATE COULD HAVE BEEN HIS.
OR HIS FATE, HERS.
RAHNE'S WOLFEN TRANSITIONAL FORM--PART-HUMAN, PART-WOLF--COMBINES THE BEST ELEMENTS OF BOTH SPECIES. SHE CAN STAND ERECT AND THEREBY BLEND INTO A CROWD...
...WHILE HER ULTRA-KEEN PERCEPTIONS...
...LEAD HER UNERRINGLY TO HER QUARRY.
GRRRRR
HER PREY.

WHAT THE HECK WAS *THAT*?!
SOME DOG. WHO CARES?!
THAT WAS NO DOG, SIMONE.
FINE, ROGER. IT'S A *WEREWOLF*, COME TO RIP OUR HEARTS. OUT, OKAY? SATISFIED?!
NO LESS'N WE DESERVE.
DON'T GET MENTAL, DIANA.
IT WASN'T OUR FAULT. HOW WERE WE TO KNOW BODINE WOULD FREAK LIKE THAT?
I *WARNED* YOU, PETER!
GIVE US A BREAK, GIRL!
IT WASN'T AS IF WE *KNEW* THE GEEK.
AND BESIDES, THE WAY I HEARD, HE REALLY *WAS* A MUTIE. SO WHERE'S THE STINKIN' HARM?
THAT KIND'S BETTER OFF DEAD.
YOU'RE SICK, PETER.
GRRR
YOU SURE YOU WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS, WOLFSBANE?
THEY KILLED LARRY--SHOULDN'T THEY *PAY* FOR IT?
THEIR BLOOD FOR HIS!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, RAHNE. WHEN YOU'RE A WOLF, I SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS--THAT'S HOW WE FOUND YOU.
BUT LOOK AT THEM--*REALLY* LOOK--LISTEN TO WHAT THEY SAY AND HOW THEY SAY IT.
THEY'RE PAYING, RAHNE. SOME HAVEN'T REALIZED IT YET--MAYBE SOME NEVER WILL--BUT THEY ARE. AND THEY'LL CONTINUE TO--FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES. KILLING THEM WOULD PUT AN END TO THEIR PUNISHMENT. IT'D BE AN ACT OF MERCY.
THOSE ARE *WORDS*, DANI.
*I* NEED TO *DO* SOMETHING!
WE ALL DO, RAHNE.
WE CAN'T BRING LARRY BACK...
...BUT, PERHAPS, WE CAN ENSURE HE DIDN'T DIE FOR NOTHING.


THE NEXT DAY--AT SALEM CENTER HIGH SCHOOL...
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA SAY, KITTY?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW, SAM. I WAS UP ALL NIGHT WRESTLING WITH MY CONSCIENCE.
IN OUR OWN WAY, WE ARE AS SCARED AS LARRY.
WE WANT TO BE ACCEPTED--TO LIVE NORMAL LIVES--
--BUT HOW CAN WE, IF WE KEEP HIDING...
...BEHIND MASKS AND SECRET IDENTITIES AND THE WALLS OF OUR SCHOOL?
WHATEVER YOU DECIDE, WE'RE WITH YOU--ALL THE WAY.
EVEN IF THAT INCLUDES TELLING WHO WE REALLY ARE.
SEE, GUYS-- THAT'S THE POINT.
WE HAVE EACH OTHER TO LEAN ON.
LARRY WAS ALONE.
LIKE I AM NOW.
IF IT WAS JUST ME, I'D PHASE RIGHT THROUGH THAT PODIUM.
BUT HAVE I THE RIGHT TO COMPROMISE THE IDENTITIES OF THE NEW MUTANTS--
--AND MY FELLOW X-MEN AS WELL--EVEN IF THEY SAID I COULD?
I'M TERRIFIED.
SO WHAT AM I GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
FIRST TIME OUT FOR MY NEW GLASSES. WONDER HOW I LOOK?
SOME OF YOU KNOW ME. MOST DON'T. I'M HERE BECAUSE I GUESS I KNEW LARRY BODINE BEST.
BUT THAT ISN'T SAYING MUCH.
I HARDLY KNEW HIM AT ALL.
IF I HAD, MAYBE WE WOULDN'T BE AT THIS MEMORIAL ASSEMBLY.


WHO WAS HE, THEN, THAT WE GATHER TO MOURN HIM?
WHO AM I?
A FOUR-EYED, FLAT-CHESTED, BRAT, CHICK, BRAIN, HEBE, STUCK-UP XAVIER'S SNOB FREAK!
DON'T LIKE THE WORDS? I COULD USE NICER. I'VE HEARD WORSE. WHO HERE HASN'T? SO OFTEN, SO CASUALLY, THAT MAYBE WE'VE FORGOTTEN THE POWER THEY HAVE TO HURT.
NIGGER, SPIC, WOP, SLOPE, FAGGOT, MUTIE--THE LIST IS SO LONG. AND SO CRUEL.
THEY'RE LABELS. PUT-DOWNS.
AND THEY *HURT.*
BUT USUALLY WE LAUGH IT OFF OR HIT BACK--WITH WORDS OF OUR OWN, OR FISTS--OR WE SUFFER IN SILENCE. NO BIG DEAL--THIS IS THE ROUGH EDGE OF REALITY, RIGHT? WHY MAKE A FUSS?
TROUBLE WAS, WHEN SOMEONE LABELED LARRY BODINE A "MUTIE," THEY HIT HOME--BECAUSE HE WAS.
HIS POWER CREATED BEAUTY. THAT'S IT. HE DID WITH LIGHT AND COLOR WHAT MOZART DID WITH MUSIC. AND HE WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE ACCEPTED BY HIS PEERS. AND POSSIBLY EVEN LIKED--
--AND ISN'T THAT WHAT *ANY* OF US REALLY WANT? TO HAVE FRIENDS. PEOPLE TO CARE FOR US? NOT TO BE ALONE?
IF WE'RE LUCKY, WE HAVE SOMEONE TO TURN TO.
LARRY DIDN'T.
HE THOUGHT, IF PEOPLE KNEW THE TRUTH, THEY'D STOP SEEING *HIM* AND SEE ONLY THE *LABEL*, THE BRAND, HIS PERSONAL "SCARLET LETTER."
SO HE HID THE TRUTH AND LIVED IN TERROR OF BEING DISCOVERED. HE EVEN JOINED IN WHEN OTHERS PUT MUTANTS DOWN.
WHAT MATTER THE COST TO HIS SOUL IF IT MADE HIS LIFE A LITTLE BETTER.
THAT'S THE TRAGEDY, THAT'S OUR SHAME.
THINK OF WHAT YOU SAY. IMAGINE IT BEING SAID ABOUT YOU. IT'S EASY TO MAKE FUN, REAL EASY TO BE CRUEL. TRY SOMETIME BEING ON THE RECEIVING END.
IF WE'RE TO LEARN ANYTHING FROM LARRY'S DEATH, IT SHOULD BE THIS...
EXIT
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO I AM?
I'M *KATHERINE PRYDE.*
THAT'S THE *ONLY* THING THAT MATTERS.
THE REST ARE JUST LABELS.
NEXT: BLOODY SUNDAY!

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25TH
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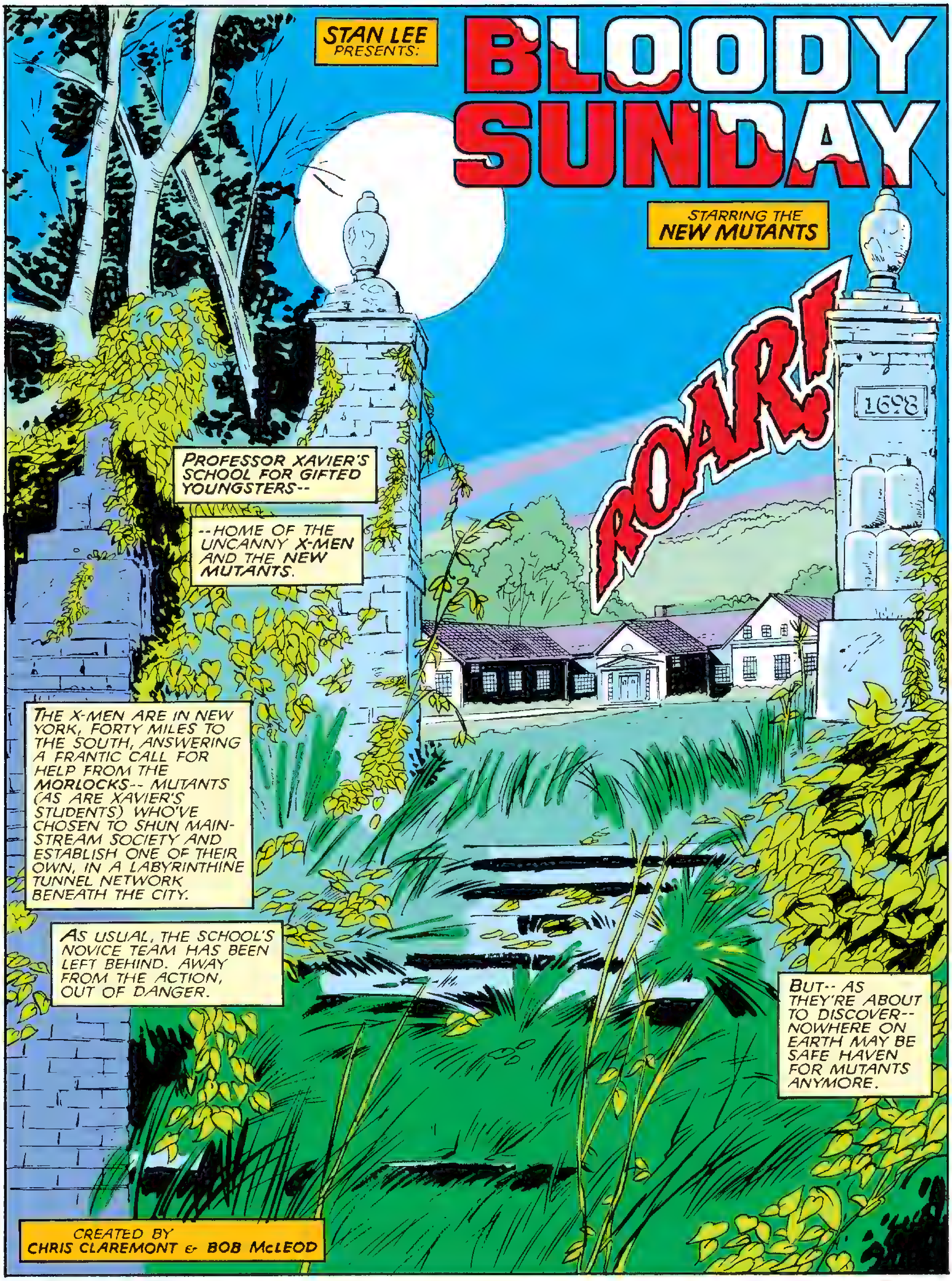
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE NEW
MUTANTS®
CLEAR OUT, KIDS--
--THIS IS A JOB FOR THE X-MEN!


STAN LEE PRESENTS:
BLOODY SUNDAY
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS
ROAR!
1698
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS--
--HOME OF THE UNCANNY X-MEN AND THE NEW MUTANTS.
THE X-MEN ARE IN NEW YORK, FORTY MILES TO THE SOUTH, ANSWERING A FRANTIC CALL FOR HELP FROM THE MORLOCKS-- MUTANTS (AS ARE XAVIER'S STUDENTS) WHO'VE CHOSEN TO SHUN MAINSTREAM SOCIETY AND ESTABLISH ONE OF THEIR OWN, IN A LABYRINTHINE TUNNEL NETWORK BENEATH THE CITY.
AS USUAL, THE SCHOOL'S NOVICE TEAM HAS BEEN LEFT BEHIND. AWAY FROM THE ACTION, OUT OF DANGER.
BUT-- AS THEY'RE ABOUT TO DISCOVER-- NOWHERE ON EARTH MAY BE SAFE HAVEN FOR MUTANTS ANYMORE.
CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT & BOB McLEOD

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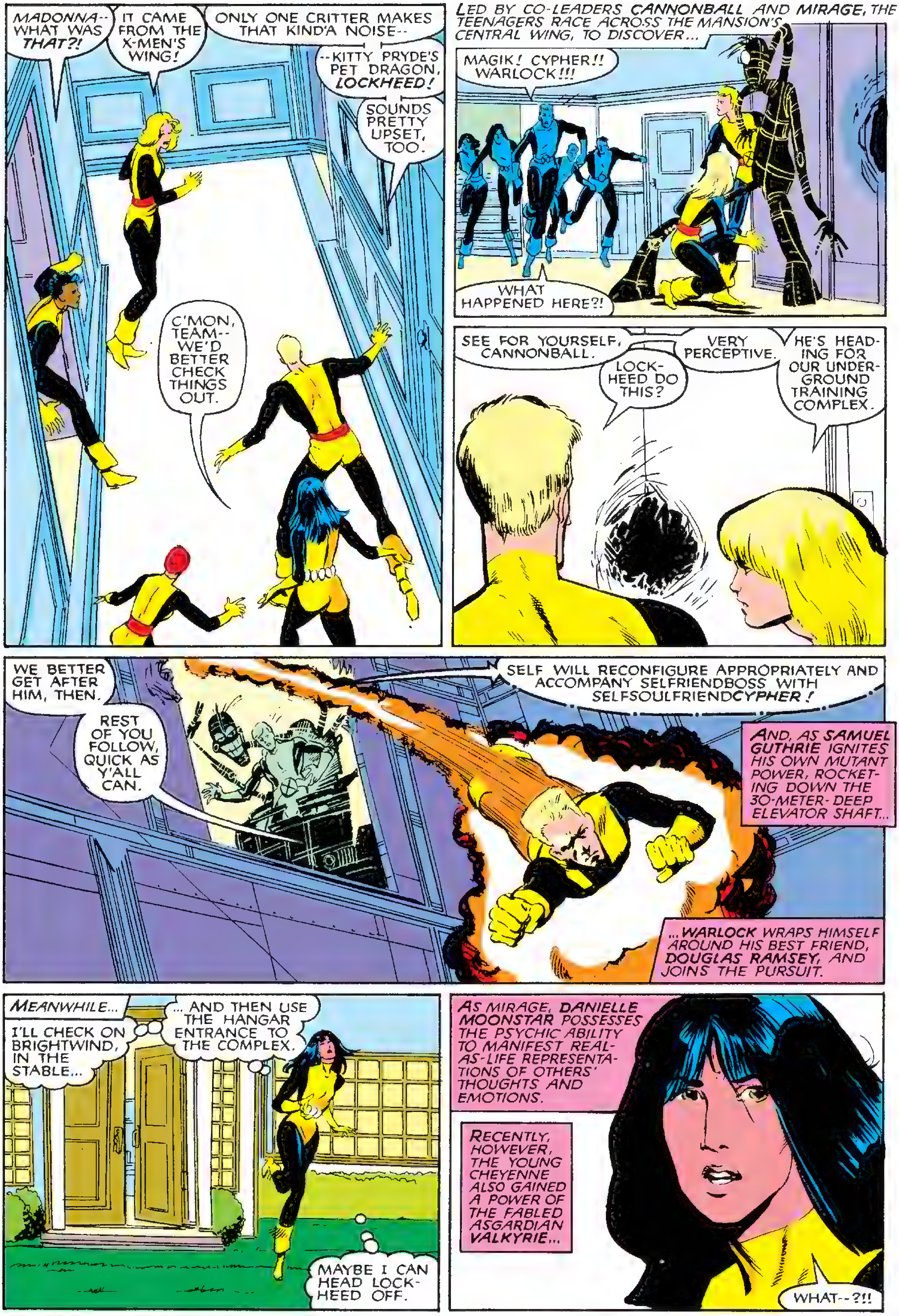
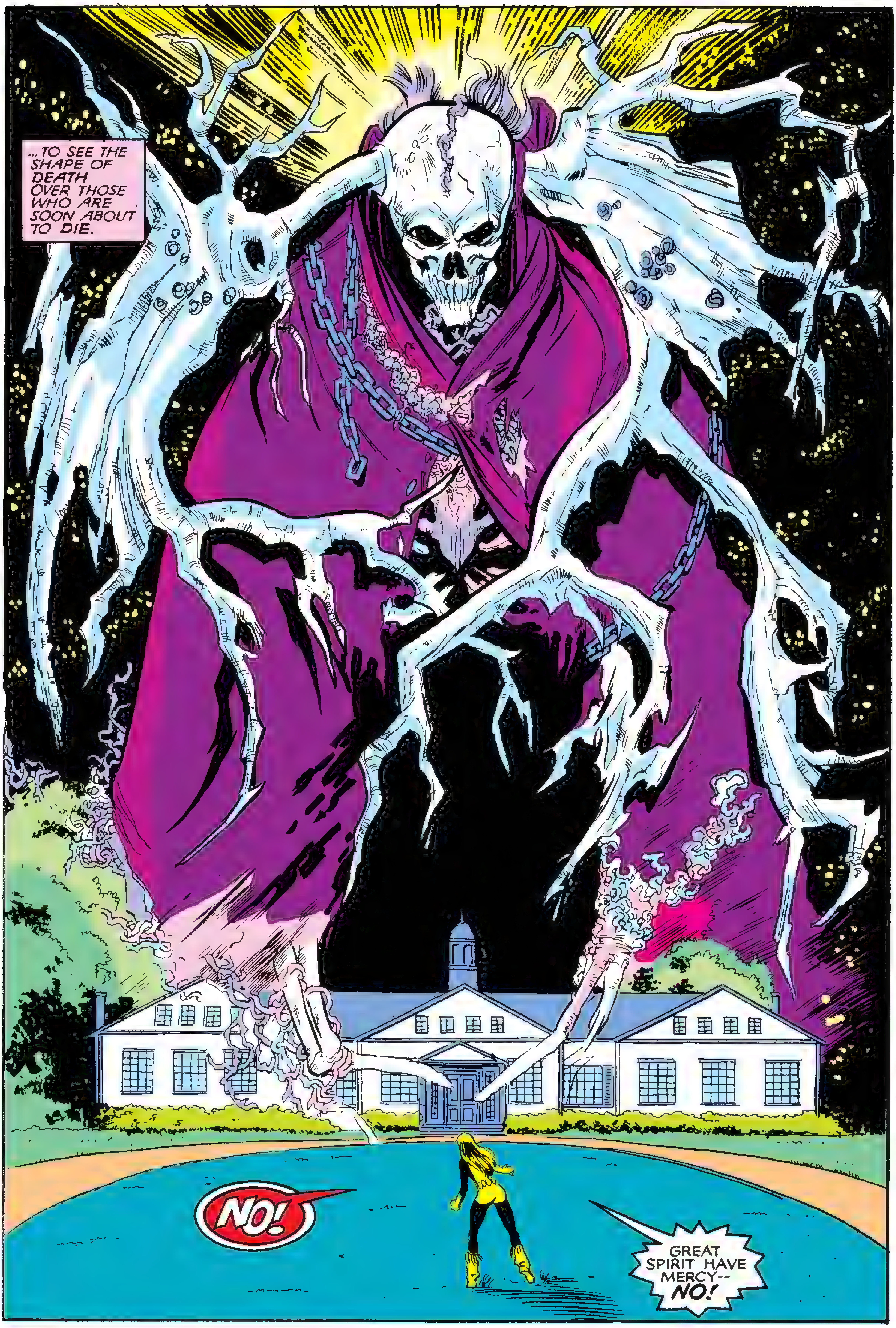
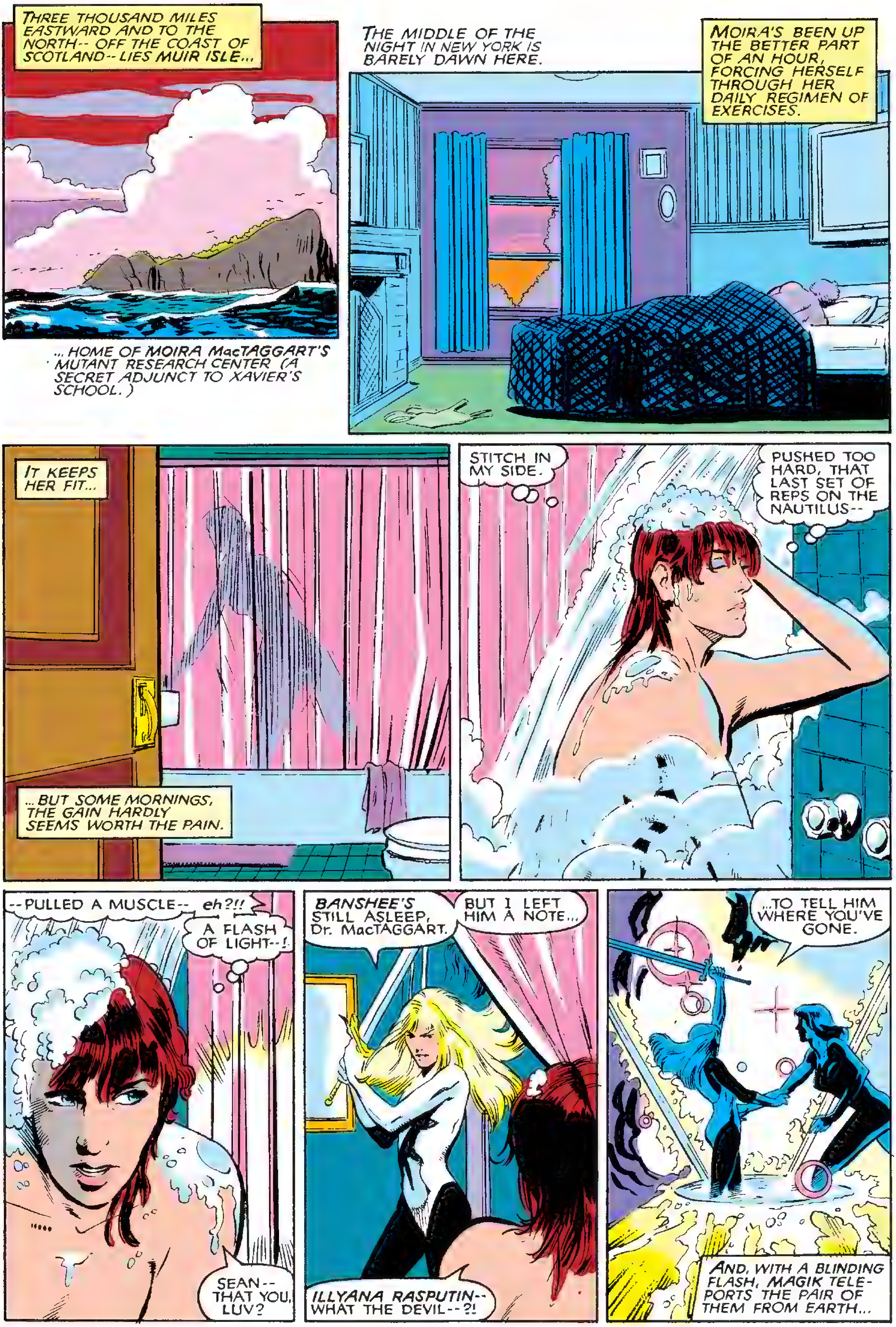
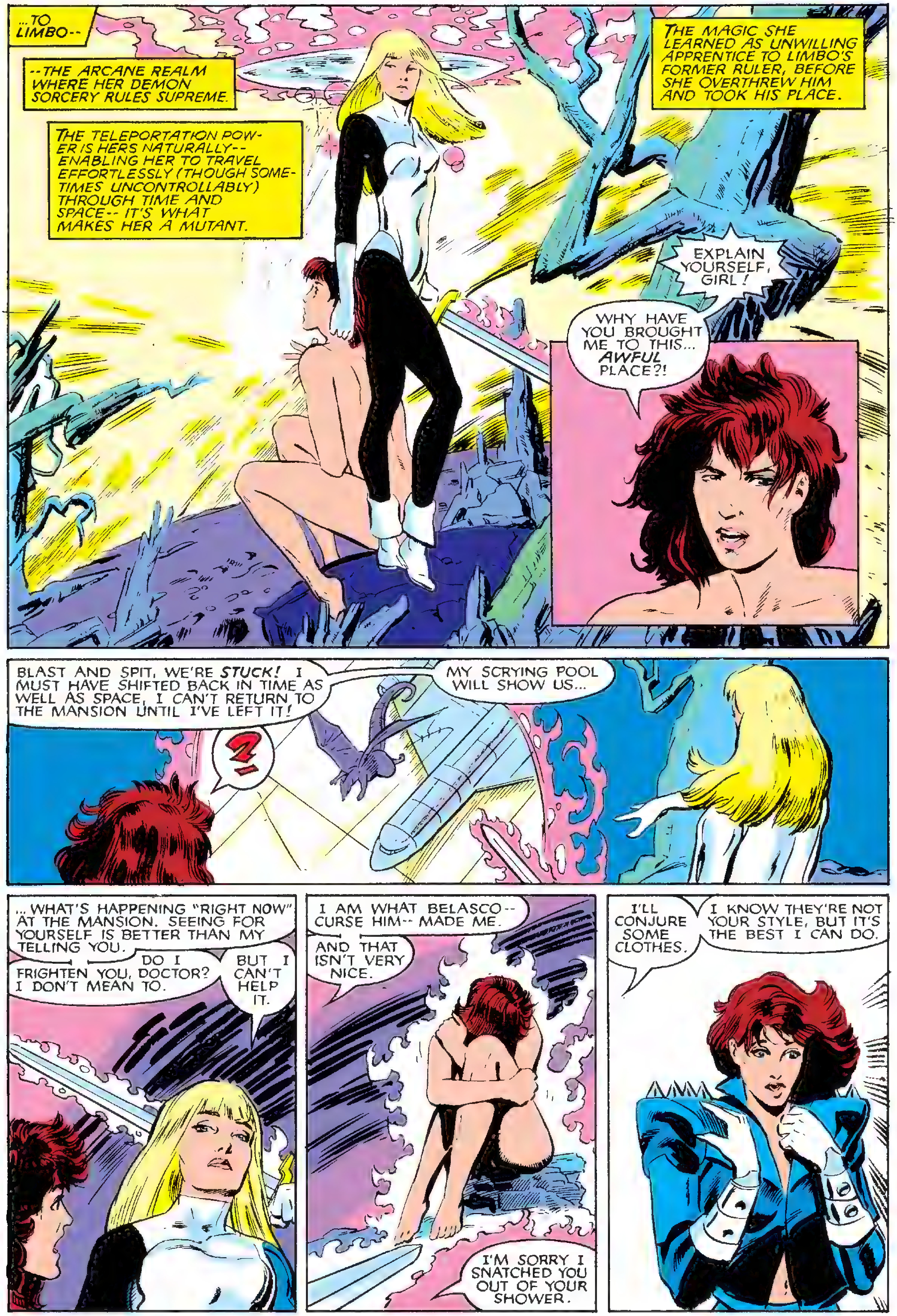
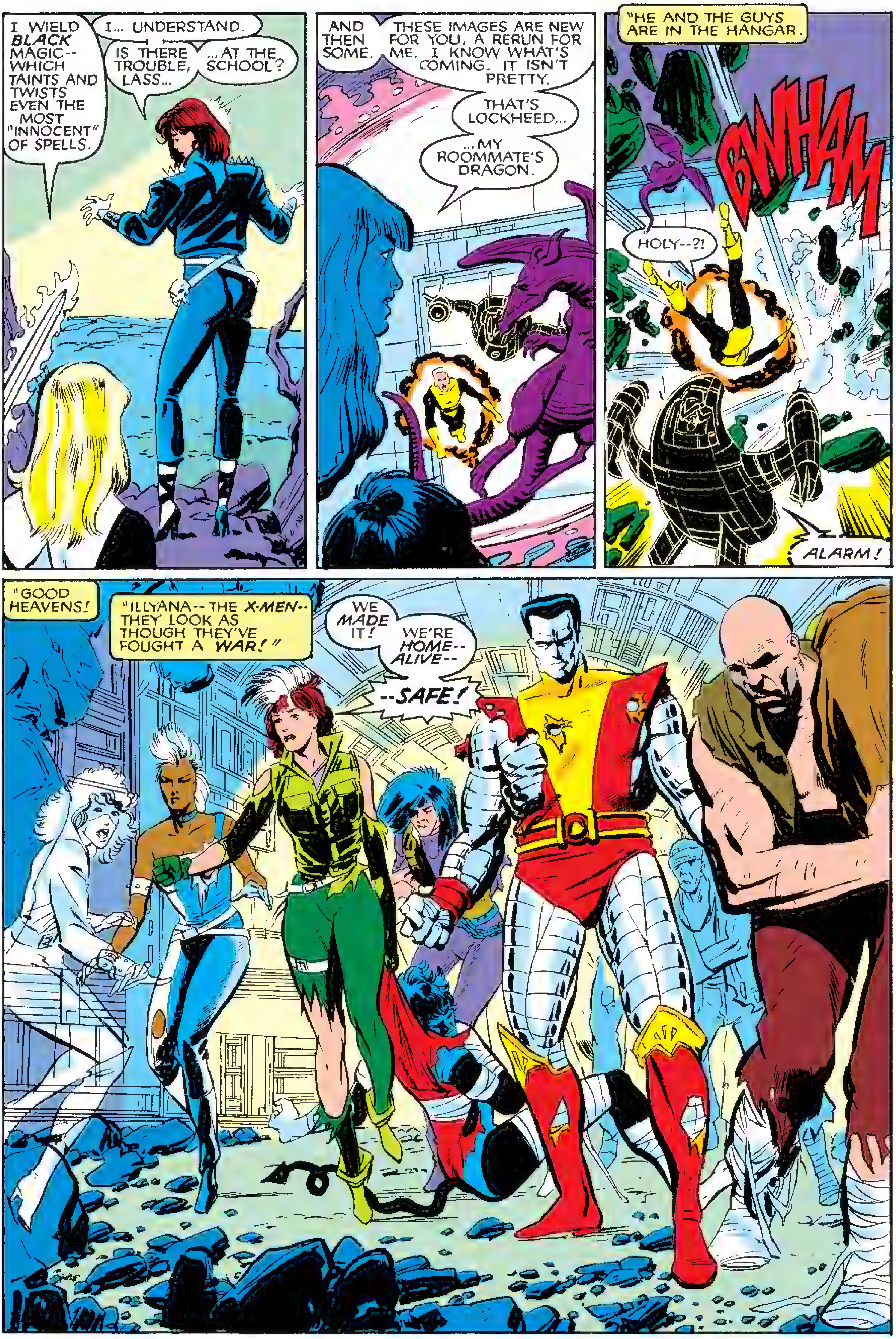
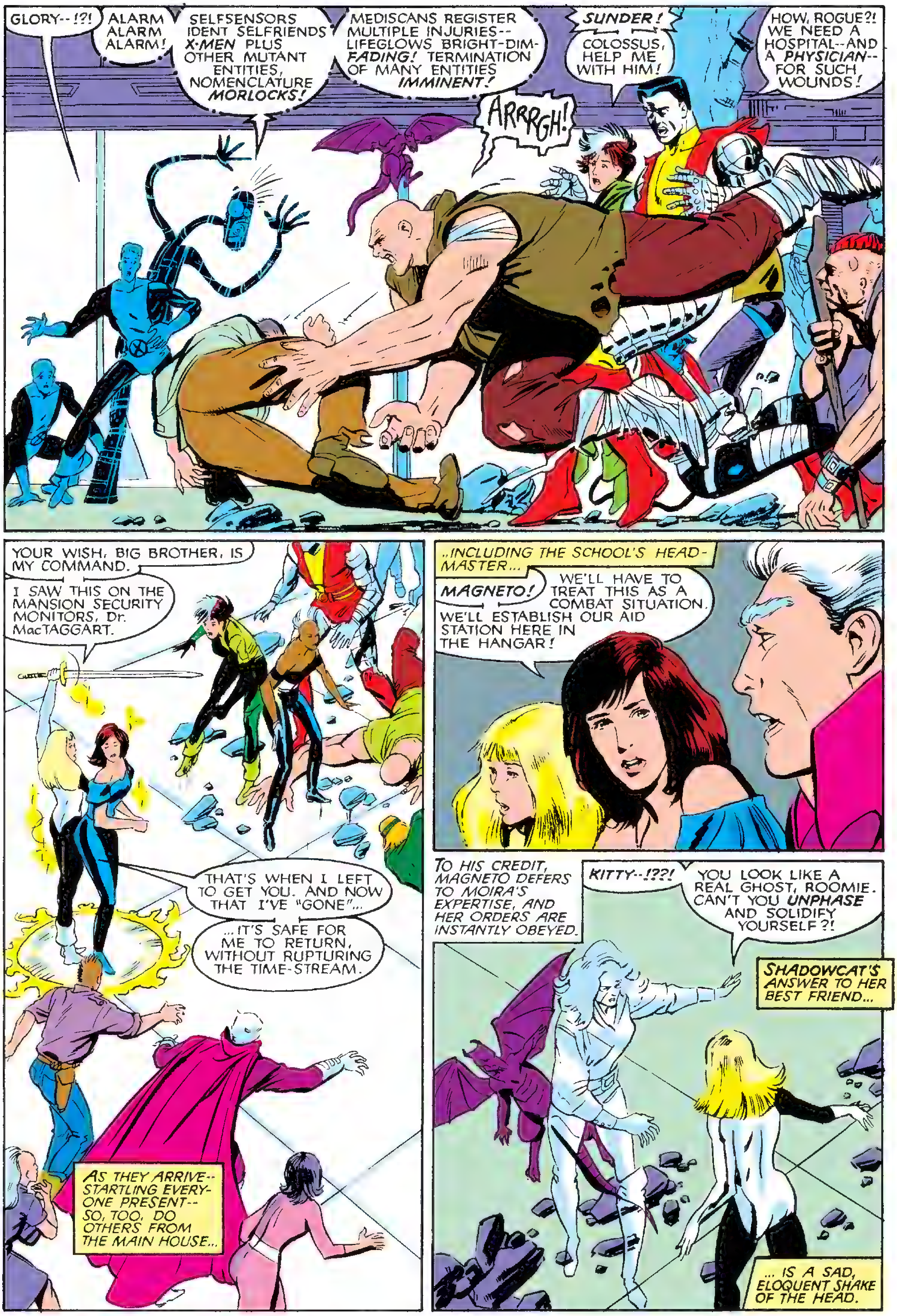

MADONNA-- WHAT WAS *THAT?!*
IT CAME FROM THE X-MEN'S WING!
ONLY ONE CRITTER MAKES THAT KIND'A NOISE--
--KITTY PRYDE'S PET DRAGON, ***LOCKHEED!***
SOUNDS PRETTY UPSET, TOO.
C'MON, TEAM-- WE'D BETTER CHECK THINGS OUT.
*LED BY CO-LEADERS **CANNONBALL** AND **MIRAGE,** THE TEENAGERS RACE ACROSS THE MANSION'S CENTRAL WING, TO DISCOVER...*
MAGIK! CYPHER!! WARLOCK!!!
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?!
SEE FOR YOURSELF, CANNONBALL.
LOCKHEED DO THIS?
VERY PERCEPTIVE.
HE'S HEADING FOR OUR UNDERGROUND TRAINING COMPLEX.
WE BETTER GET AFTER HIM, THEN.
REST OF YOU FOLLOW, QUICK AS Y'ALL CAN.
SELF WILL RECONFIGURE APPROPRIATELY AND ACCOMPANY SELFFRIENDBOSS WITH SELFSOULFRIEND***CYPHER!***
*AND, AS **SAMUEL GUTHRIE** IGNITES HIS OWN MUTANT POWER, ROCKETING DOWN THE 30-METER-DEEP ELEVATOR SHAFT...*
*...**WARLOCK** WRAPS HIMSELF AROUND HIS BEST FRIEND, **DOUGLAS RAMSEY,** AND JOINS THE PURSUIT.*
*MEANWHILE...*
I'LL CHECK ON BRIGHTWIND, IN THE STABLE...
... AND THEN USE THE HANGAR ENTRANCE TO THE COMPLEX.
MAYBE I CAN HEAD LOCKHEED OFF.
*AS MIRAGE, **DANIELLE MOONSTAR** POSSESSES THE PSYCHIC ABILITY TO MANIFEST REAL-AS-LIFE REPRESENTATIONS OF OTHERS' THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS.*
*RECENTLY, HOWEVER, THE YOUNG CHEYENNE ALSO GAINED A POWER OF THE FABLED ASGARDIAN **VALKYRIE...***
WHAT--?!!

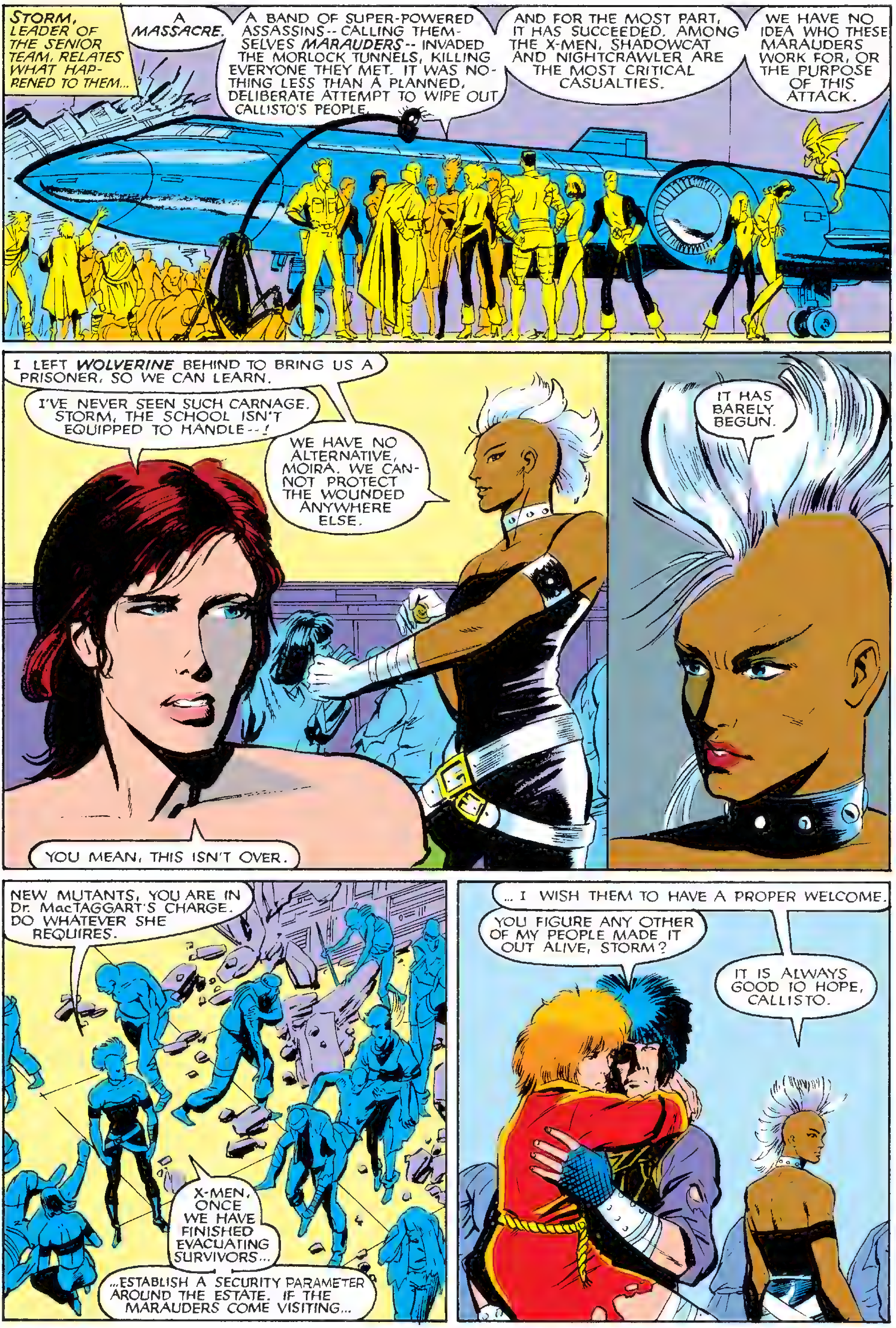

...TO SEE THE SHAPE OF DEATH OVER THOSE WHO ARE SOON ABOUT TO DIE.
NO!
GREAT SPIRIT HAVE MERCY-- NO!

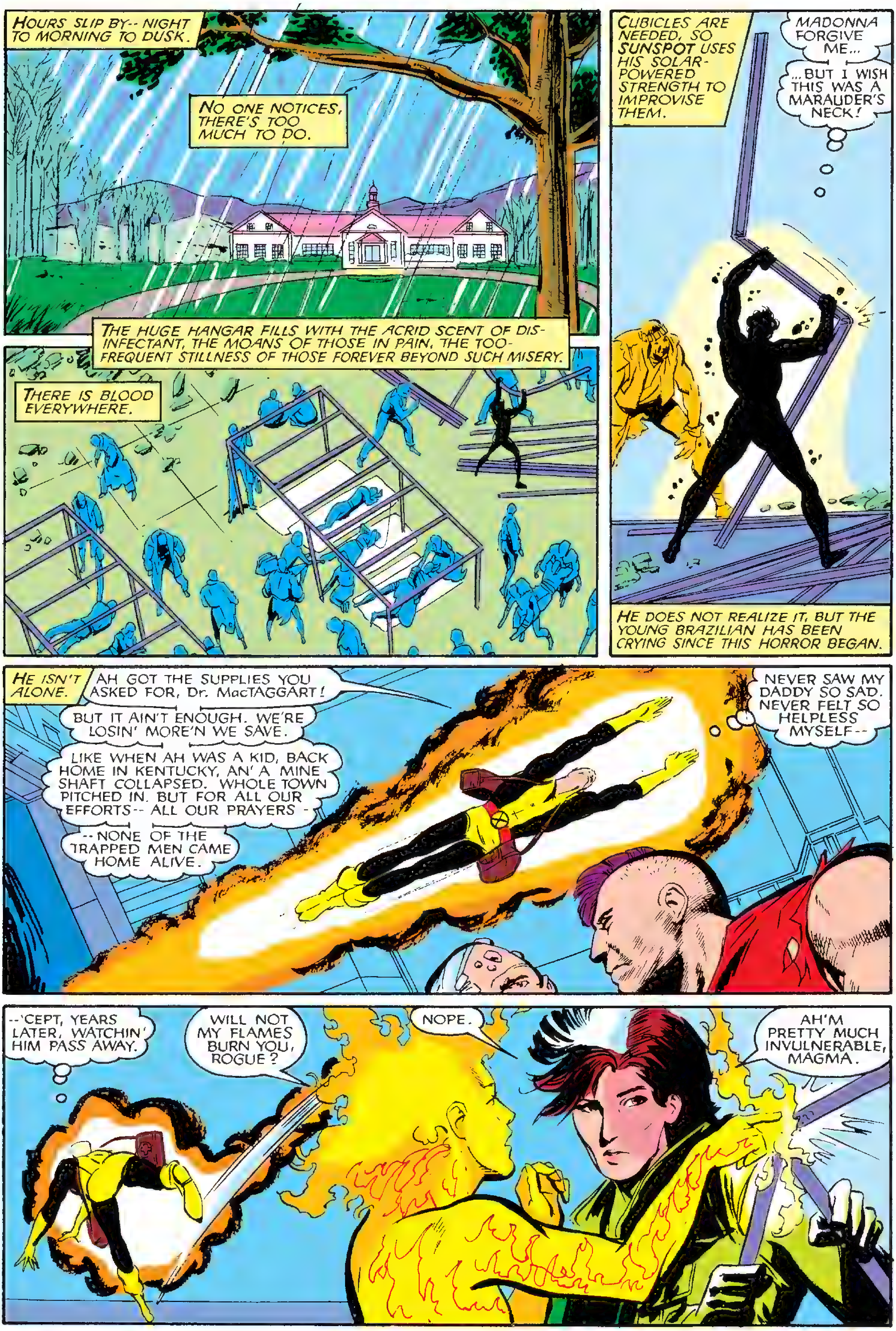

THREE THOUSAND MILES EASTWARD AND TO THE NORTH-- OFF THE COAST OF SCOTLAND-- LIES MUIR ISLE...
...HOME OF MOIRA MacTAGGART'S MUTANT RESEARCH CENTER (A SECRET ADJUNCT TO XAVIER'S SCHOOL.)
THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT IN NEW YORK IS BARELY DAWN HERE.
MOIRA'S BEEN UP THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR, FORCING HERSELF THROUGH HER DAILY REGIMEN OF EXERCISES.
IT KEEPS HER FIT...
...BUT SOME MORNINGS, THE GAIN HARDLY SEEMS WORTH THE PAIN.
STITCH IN MY SIDE.
PUSHED TOO HARD, THAT LAST SET OF REPS ON THE NAUTILUS--
--PULLED A MUSCLE-- eh?!!
A FLASH OF LIGHT--!
SEAN-- THAT YOU, LUV?
BANSHEE'S STILL ASLEEP, Dr. MacTAGGART.
BUT I LEFT HIM A NOTE...
ILLYANA RASPUTIN-- WHAT THE DEVIL--?!
...TO TELL HIM WHERE YOU'VE GONE.
AND, WITH A BLINDING FLASH, MAGIK TELEPORTS THE PAIR OF THEM FROM EARTH...

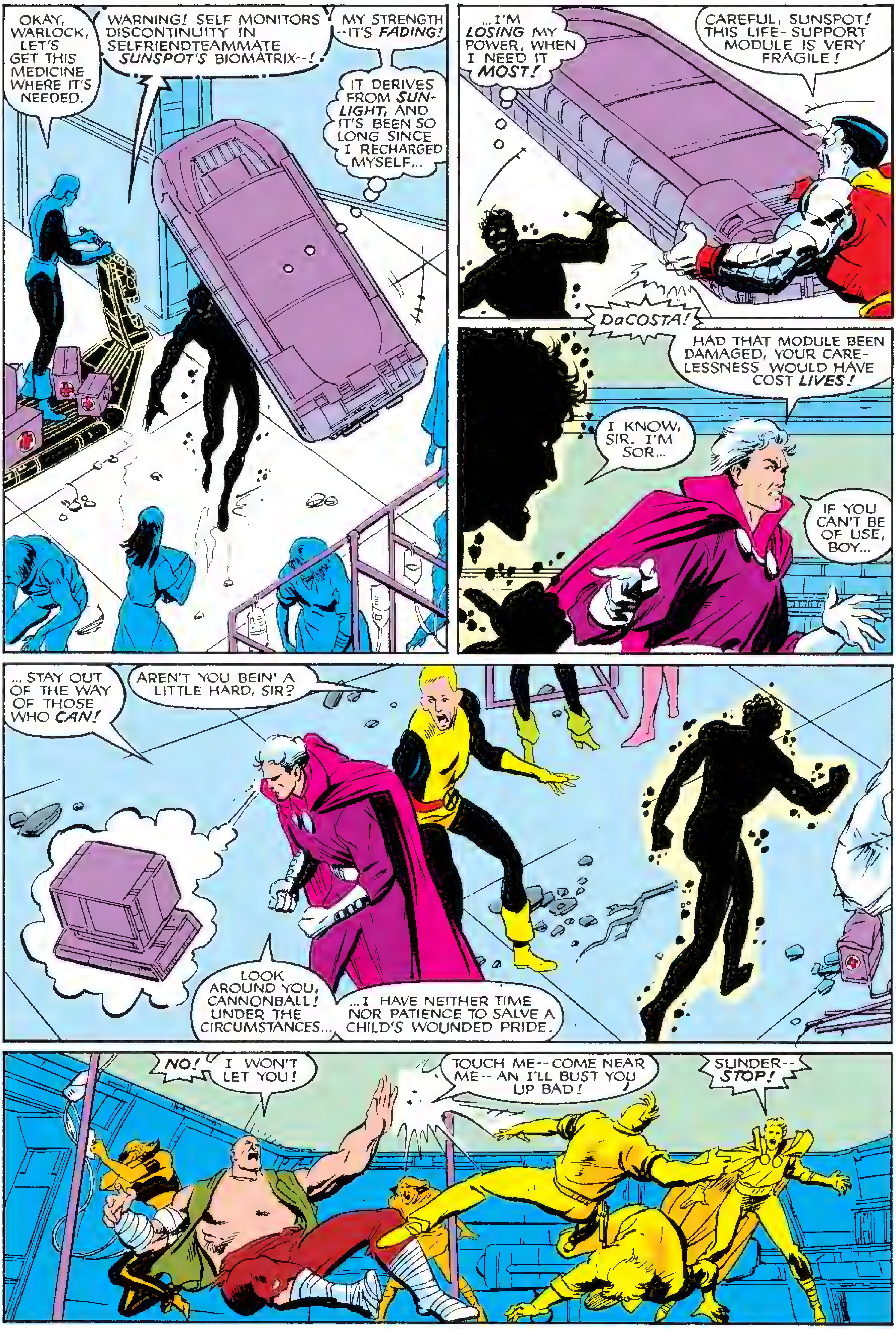

...TO LIMBO--
--THE ARCANE REALM WHERE HER DEMON SORCERY RULES SUPREME.
THE TELEPORTATION POWER IS HERS NATURALLY--ENABLING HER TO TRAVEL EFFORTLESSLY (THOUGH SOMETIMES UNCONTROLLABLY) THROUGH TIME AND SPACE-- IT'S WHAT MAKES HER A MUTANT.
THE MAGIC SHE LEARNED AS UNWILLING APPRENTICE TO LIMBO'S FORMER RULER, BEFORE SHE OVERTHREW HIM AND TOOK HIS PLACE.
EXPLAIN YOURSELF, GIRL!
WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME TO THIS... *AWFUL* PLACE?!
BLAST AND SPIT, WE'RE *STUCK!* I MUST HAVE SHIFTED BACK IN TIME AS WELL AS SPACE. I CAN'T RETURN TO THE MANSION UNTIL I'VE LEFT IT!
MY SCRYING POOL WILL SHOW US...
?
...WHAT'S HAPPENING "RIGHT NOW" AT THE MANSION. SEEING FOR YOURSELF IS BETTER THAN MY TELLING YOU.
DO I FRIGHTEN YOU, DOCTOR? I DON'T MEAN TO.
BUT I CAN'T HELP IT.
I AM WHAT BELASCO-- CURSE HIM-- MADE ME.
AND THAT ISN'T VERY NICE.
I'M SORRY I SNATCHED YOU OUT OF YOUR SHOWER.
I'LL CONJURE SOME CLOTHES.
I KNOW THEY'RE NOT YOUR STYLE, BUT IT'S THE BEST I CAN DO.

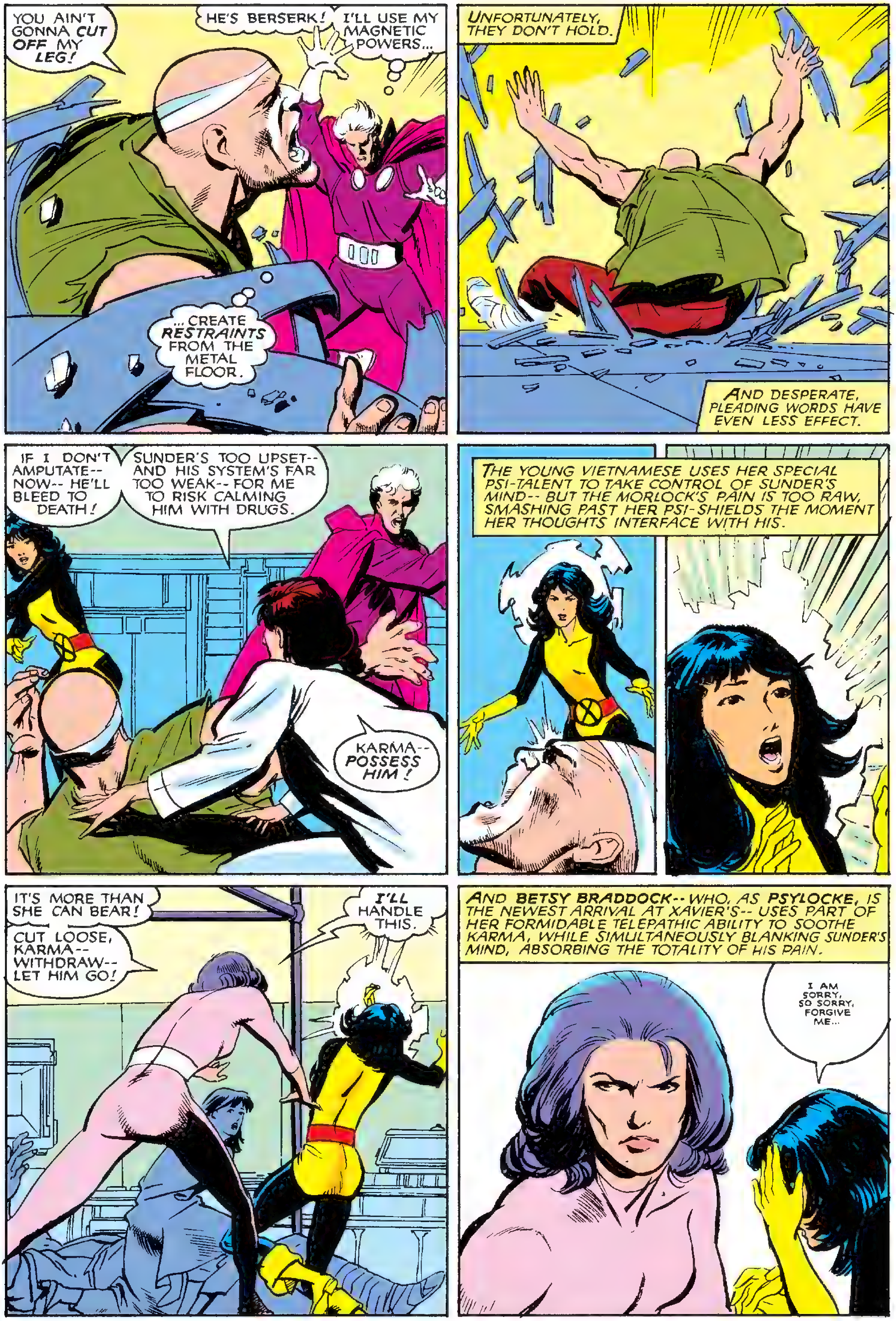

I WIELD *BLACK* MAGIC-- WHICH TAINTS AND TWISTS EVEN THE MOST "INNOCENT" OF SPELLS.
I... UNDERSTAND.
IS THERE TROUBLE, LASS...
...AT THE SCHOOL?
AND THEN SOME.
THESE IMAGES ARE NEW FOR YOU, A RERUN FOR ME. I KNOW WHAT'S COMING. IT ISN'T PRETTY.
THAT'S LOCKHEED...
...MY ROOMMATE'S DRAGON.
"HE AND THE GUYS ARE IN THE HANGAR.
BWHAM
HOLY--?!
ALARM!
"GOOD HEAVENS!
"ILLYANA--THE *X-MEN*--THEY LOOK AS THOUGH THEY'VE FOUGHT A *WAR!*"
WE *MADE* IT!
WE'RE *HOME*--*ALIVE*--
--*SAFE!*

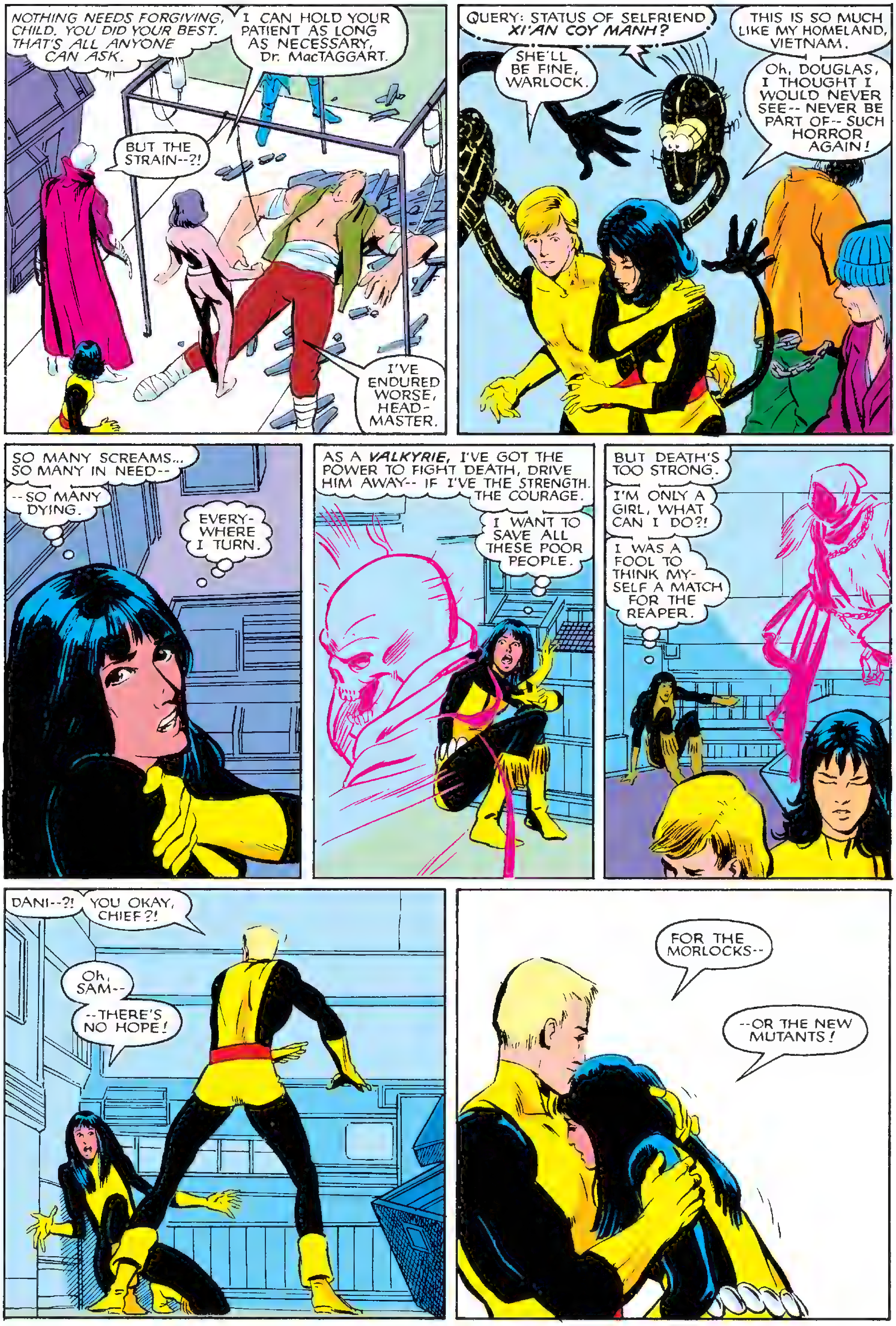

GLORY--!?!
ALARM ALARM ALARM!
SELFSENSORS IDENT SELFFRIENDS *X-MEN* PLUS OTHER MUTANT ENTITIES, NOMENCLATURE *MORLOCKS!*
MEDISCANS REGISTER MULTIPLE INJURIES--LIFEGLOWS BRIGHT-DIM-*FADING!* TERMINATION OF MANY ENTITIES *IMMINENT!*
*SUNDER!*
COLOSSUS, HELP ME WITH HIM!
ARRRGH!
HOW, ROGUE?! WE NEED A HOSPITAL--AND A *PHYSICIAN*--FOR SUCH WOUNDS!
YOUR WISH, BIG BROTHER, IS MY COMMAND.
I SAW THIS ON THE MANSION SECURITY MONITORS, Dr. MacTAGGART.
THAT'S WHEN I LEFT TO GET YOU. AND NOW THAT I'VE "GONE"...
...IT'S SAFE FOR ME TO RETURN, WITHOUT RUPTURING THE TIME-STREAM.
*AS THEY ARRIVE--STARTLING EVERYONE PRESENT--SO, TOO, DO OTHERS FROM THE MAIN HOUSE...*
*...INCLUDING THE SCHOOL'S HEADMASTER...*
*MAGNETO!*
WE'LL HAVE TO TREAT THIS AS A COMBAT SITUATION. WE'LL ESTABLISH OUR AID STATION HERE IN THE HANGAR!
*TO HIS CREDIT, MAGNETO DEFERS TO MOIRA'S EXPERTISE, AND HER ORDERS ARE INSTANTLY OBEYED.*
*KITTY--!??!*
YOU LOOK LIKE A REAL GHOST, ROOMIE. CAN'T YOU *UNPHASE* AND SOLIDIFY YOURSELF?!
*SHADOWCAT'S ANSWER TO HER BEST FRIEND...*
*...IS A SAD, ELOQUENT SHAKE OF THE HEAD.*

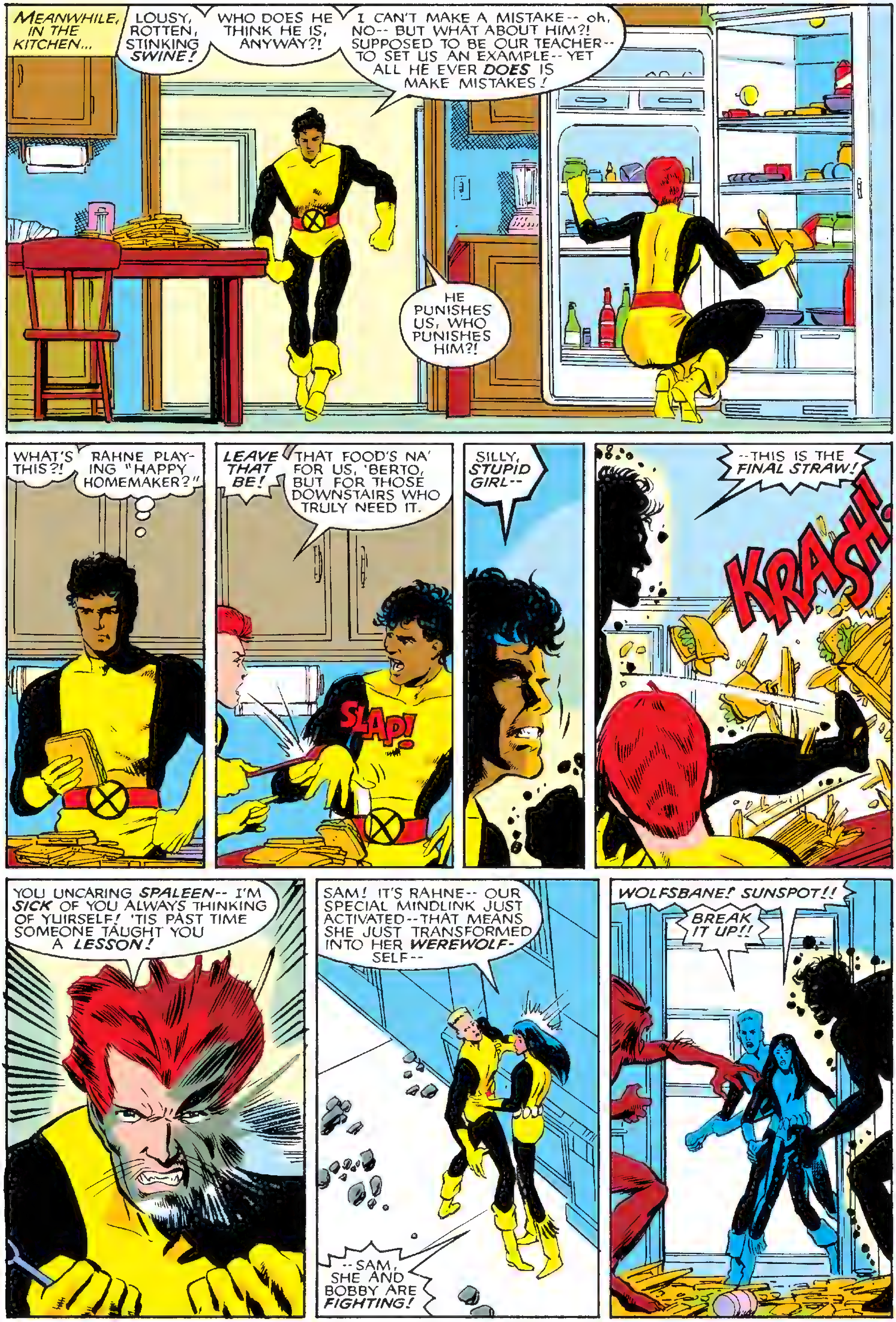

STORM, LEADER OF THE SENIOR TEAM, RELATES WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...
A MASSACRE.
A BAND OF SUPER-POWERED ASSASSINS--CALLING THEMSELVES MARAUDERS--INVADED THE MORLOCK TUNNELS, KILLING EVERYONE THEY MET. IT WAS NOTHING LESS THAN A PLANNED, DELIBERATE ATTEMPT TO WIPE OUT CALLISTO'S PEOPLE.
AND FOR THE MOST PART, IT HAS SUCCEEDED. AMONG THE X-MEN, SHADOWCAT AND NIGHTCRAWLER ARE THE MOST CRITICAL CASUALTIES.
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHO THESE MARAUDERS WORK FOR, OR THE PURPOSE OF THIS ATTACK.
I LEFT WOLVERINE BEHIND TO BRING US A PRISONER, SO WE CAN LEARN.
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH CARNAGE. STORM, THE SCHOOL ISN'T EQUIPPED TO HANDLE--!
WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE, MOIRA. WE CANNOT PROTECT THE WOUNDED ANYWHERE ELSE.
YOU MEAN, THIS ISN'T OVER.
IT HAS BARELY BEGUN.
NEW MUTANTS, YOU ARE IN Dr. MacTAGGART'S CHARGE. DO WHATEVER SHE REQUIRES.
X-MEN, ONCE WE HAVE FINISHED EVACUATING SURVIVORS...
...ESTABLISH A SECURITY PARAMETER AROUND THE ESTATE. IF THE MARAUDERS COME VISITING...
...I WISH THEM TO HAVE A PROPER WELCOME.
YOU FIGURE ANY OTHER OF MY PEOPLE MADE IT OUT ALIVE, STORM?
IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO HOPE, CALLISTO.

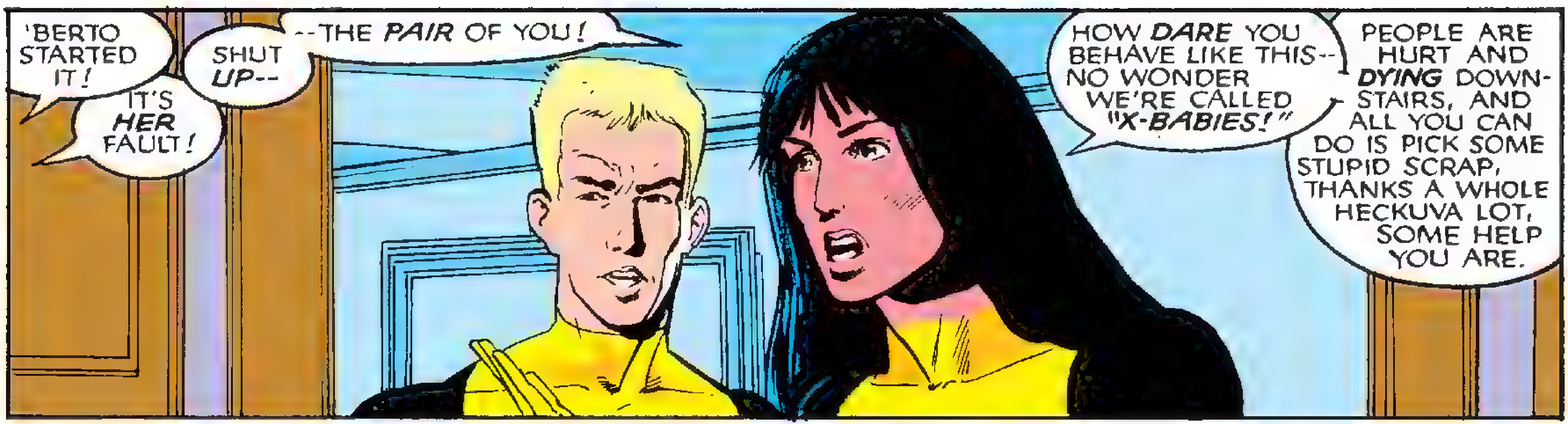

HOURS SLIP BY-- NIGHT TO MORNING TO DUSK.
NO ONE NOTICES, THERE'S TOO MUCH TO DO.
CUBICLES ARE NEEDED, SO SUNSPOT USES HIS SOLAR-POWERED STRENGTH TO IMPROVISE THEM.
MADONNA FORGIVE ME...
...BUT I WISH THIS WAS A MARAUDER'S NECK!
THE HUGE HANGAR FILLS WITH THE ACRID SCENT OF DISINFECTANT, THE MOANS OF THOSE IN PAIN, THE TOO-FREQUENT STILLNESS OF THOSE FOREVER BEYOND SUCH MISERY.
THERE IS BLOOD EVERYWHERE.
HE DOES NOT REALIZE IT, BUT THE YOUNG BRAZILIAN HAS BEEN CRYING SINCE THIS HORROR BEGAN.
HE ISN'T ALONE.
AH GOT THE SUPPLIES YOU ASKED FOR, Dr. MacTAGGART!
BUT IT AIN'T ENOUGH. WE'RE LOSIN' MORE'N WE SAVE.
LIKE WHEN AH WAS A KID, BACK HOME IN KENTUCKY, AN' A MINE SHAFT COLLAPSED. WHOLE TOWN PITCHED IN. BUT FOR ALL OUR EFFORTS-- ALL OUR PRAYERS -
--NONE OF THE TRAPPED MEN CAME HOME ALIVE.
NEVER SAW MY DADDY SO SAD. NEVER FELT SO HELPLESS MYSELF--
--'CEPT, YEARS LATER, WATCHIN' HIM PASS AWAY.
WILL NOT MY FLAMES BURN YOU, ROGUE?
NOPE.
AH'M PRETTY MUCH INVULNERABLE, MAGMA.

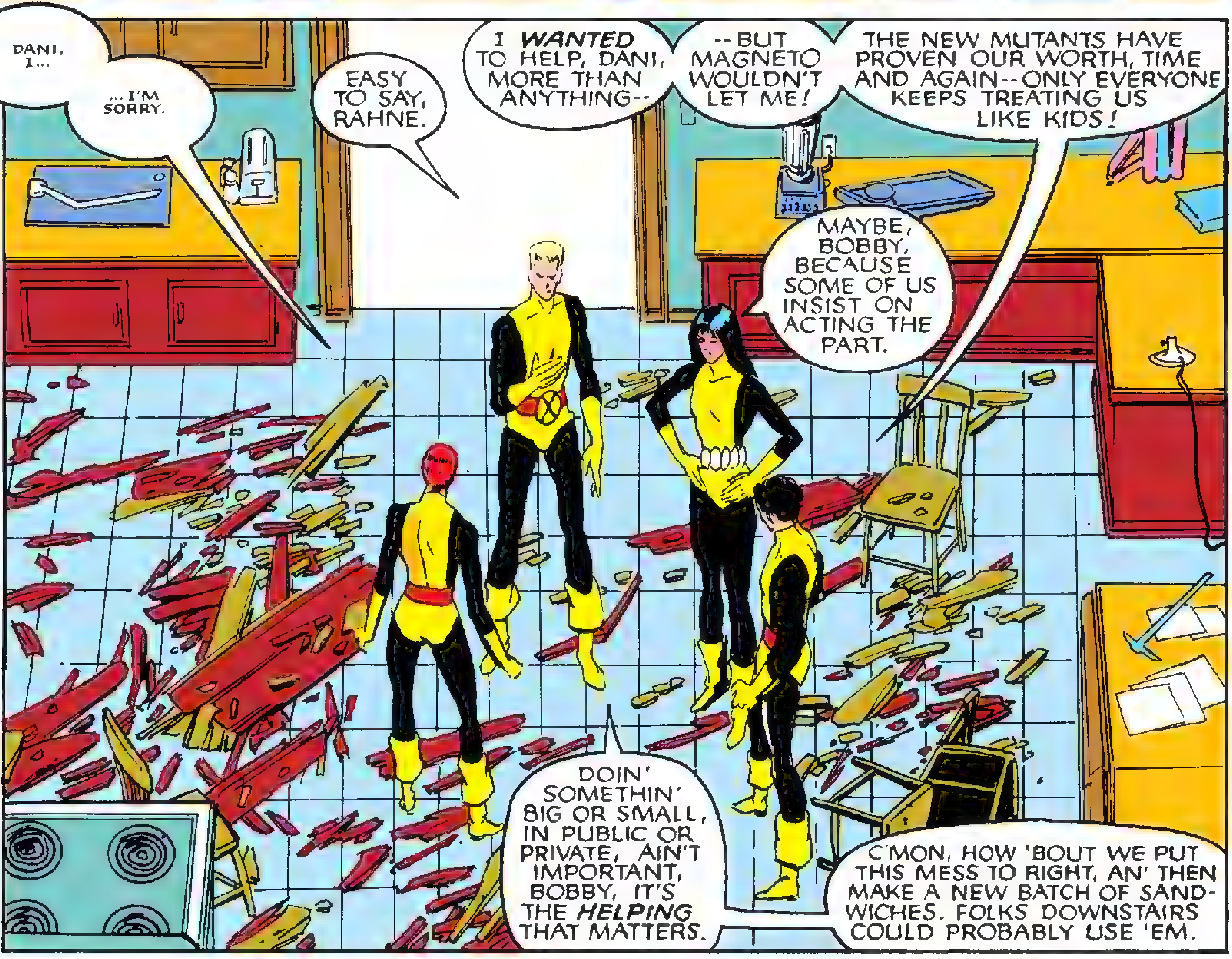

OKAY, WARLOCK, LET'S GET THIS MEDICINE WHERE IT'S NEEDED.
WARNING! SELF MONITORS DISCONTINUITY IN SELFRIENDTEAMMATE *SUNSPOT'S* BIOMATRIX--!
MY STRENGTH --IT'S *FADING!*
IT DERIVES FROM *SUNLIGHT,* AND IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I RECHARGED MYSELF...
...I'M *LOSING* MY POWER, WHEN I NEED IT *MOST!*
CAREFUL, SUNSPOT! THIS LIFE-SUPPORT MODULE IS VERY FRAGILE!
DaCOSTA!
HAD THAT MODULE BEEN DAMAGED, YOUR CARELESSNESS WOULD HAVE COST *LIVES!*
I KNOW, SIR. I'M SOR...
IF YOU CAN'T BE OF USE, BOY...
...STAY OUT OF THE WAY OF THOSE WHO *CAN!*
AREN'T YOU BEIN' A LITTLE HARD, SIR?
LOOK AROUND YOU, CANNONBALL! UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES...
...I HAVE NEITHER TIME NOR PATIENCE TO SALVE A CHILD'S WOUNDED PRIDE.
*NO!*
I WON'T LET YOU!
TOUCH ME--COME NEAR ME-- AN I'LL BUST YOU UP BAD!
SUNDER-- *STOP!*

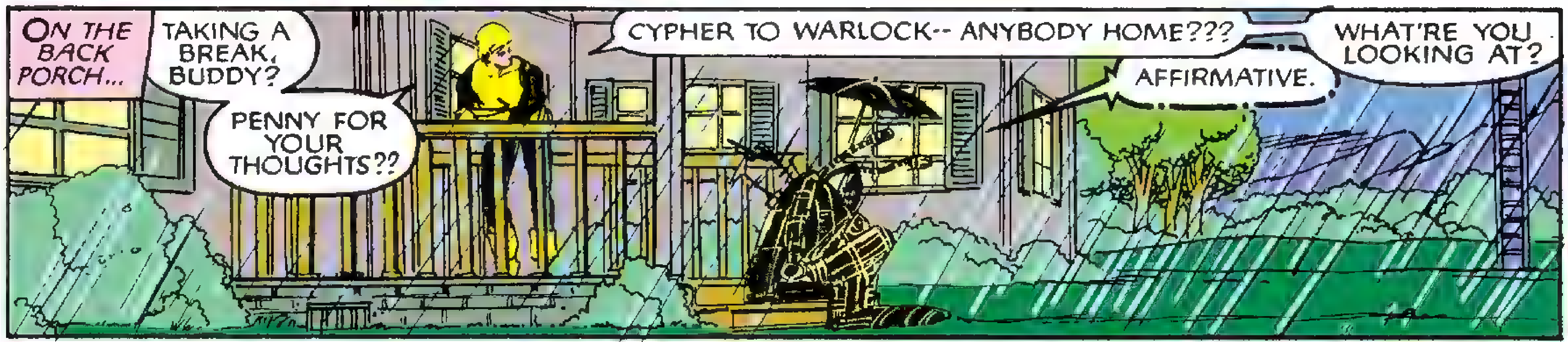

YOU AIN'T GONNA *CUT OFF* MY *LEG!*
HE'S BERSERK!
I'LL USE MY MAGNETIC POWERS...
...CREATE *RESTRAINTS* FROM THE METAL FLOOR.
UNFORTUNATELY, THEY DON'T HOLD.
AND DESPERATE, PLEADING WORDS HAVE EVEN LESS EFFECT.
IF I DON'T AMPUTATE--NOW--HE'LL BLEED TO DEATH!
SUNDER'S TOO UPSET--AND HIS SYSTEM'S FAR TOO WEAK--FOR ME TO RISK CALMING HIM WITH DRUGS.
KARMA--*POSSESS HIM!*
THE YOUNG VIETNAMESE USES HER SPECIAL PSI-TALENT TO TAKE CONTROL OF SUNDER'S MIND--BUT THE MORLOCK'S PAIN IS TOO RAW, SMASHING PAST HER PSI-SHIELDS THE MOMENT HER THOUGHTS INTERFACE WITH HIS.
IT'S MORE THAN SHE CAN BEAR!
CUT LOOSE, KARMA--WITHDRAW--LET HIM GO!
*I'LL* HANDLE THIS.
AND **BETSY BRADDOCK**--WHO, AS **PSYLOCKE**, IS THE NEWEST ARRIVAL AT XAVIER'S--USES PART OF HER FORMIDABLE TELEPATHIC ABILITY TO SOOTHE KARMA, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY BLANKING SUNDER'S MIND, ABSORBING THE TOTALITY OF HIS PAIN.
I AM SORRY, SO SORRY, FORGIVE ME...

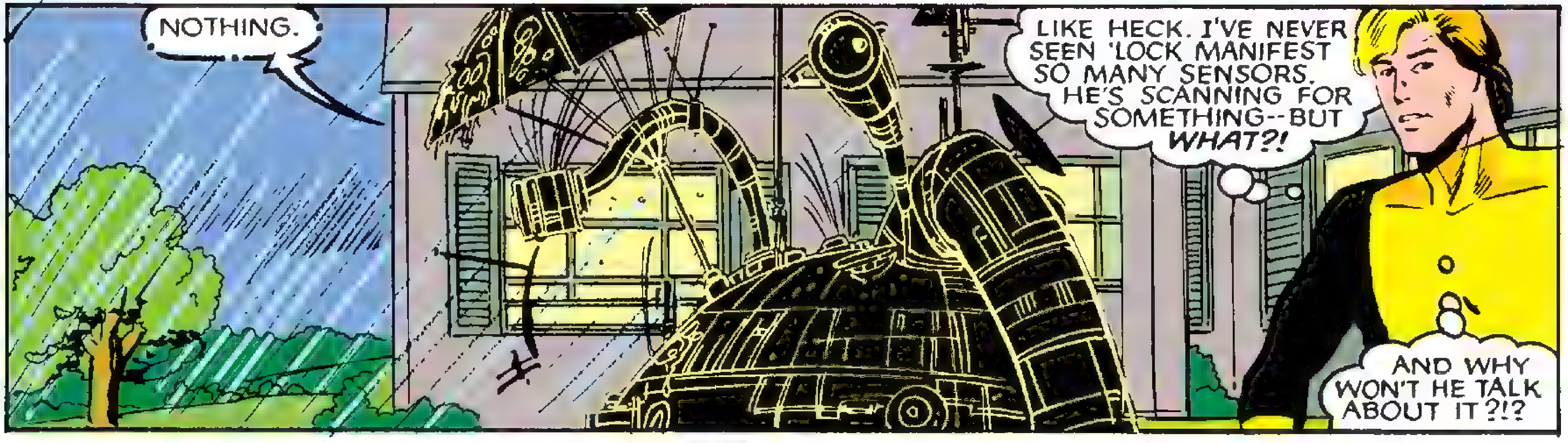

NOTHING NEEDS FORGIVING, CHILD. YOU DID YOUR BEST. THAT'S ALL ANYONE CAN ASK.
I CAN HOLD YOUR PATIENT AS LONG AS NECESSARY, Dr. MacTAGGART.
BUT THE STRAIN--?!
I'VE ENDURED WORSE, HEADMASTER.
QUERY: STATUS OF SELFRIEND XI'AN COY MANH?
SHE'LL BE FINE, WARLOCK.
THIS IS SO MUCH LIKE MY HOMELAND, VIETNAM.
Oh, DOUGLAS, I THOUGHT I WOULD NEVER SEE-- NEVER BE PART OF-- SUCH HORROR AGAIN!
SO MANY SCREAMS... SO MANY IN NEED--
--SO MANY DYING.
EVERYWHERE I TURN.
AS A VALKYRIE, I'VE GOT THE POWER TO FIGHT DEATH, DRIVE HIM AWAY-- IF I'VE THE STRENGTH. THE COURAGE.
I WANT TO SAVE ALL THESE POOR PEOPLE.
BUT DEATH'S TOO STRONG.
I'M ONLY A GIRL, WHAT CAN I DO?!
I WAS A FOOL TO THINK MYSELF A MATCH FOR THE REAPER.
DANI--?!
YOU OKAY, CHIEF?!
Oh, SAM--
--THERE'S NO HOPE!
FOR THE MORLOCKS--
--OR THE NEW MUTANTS!

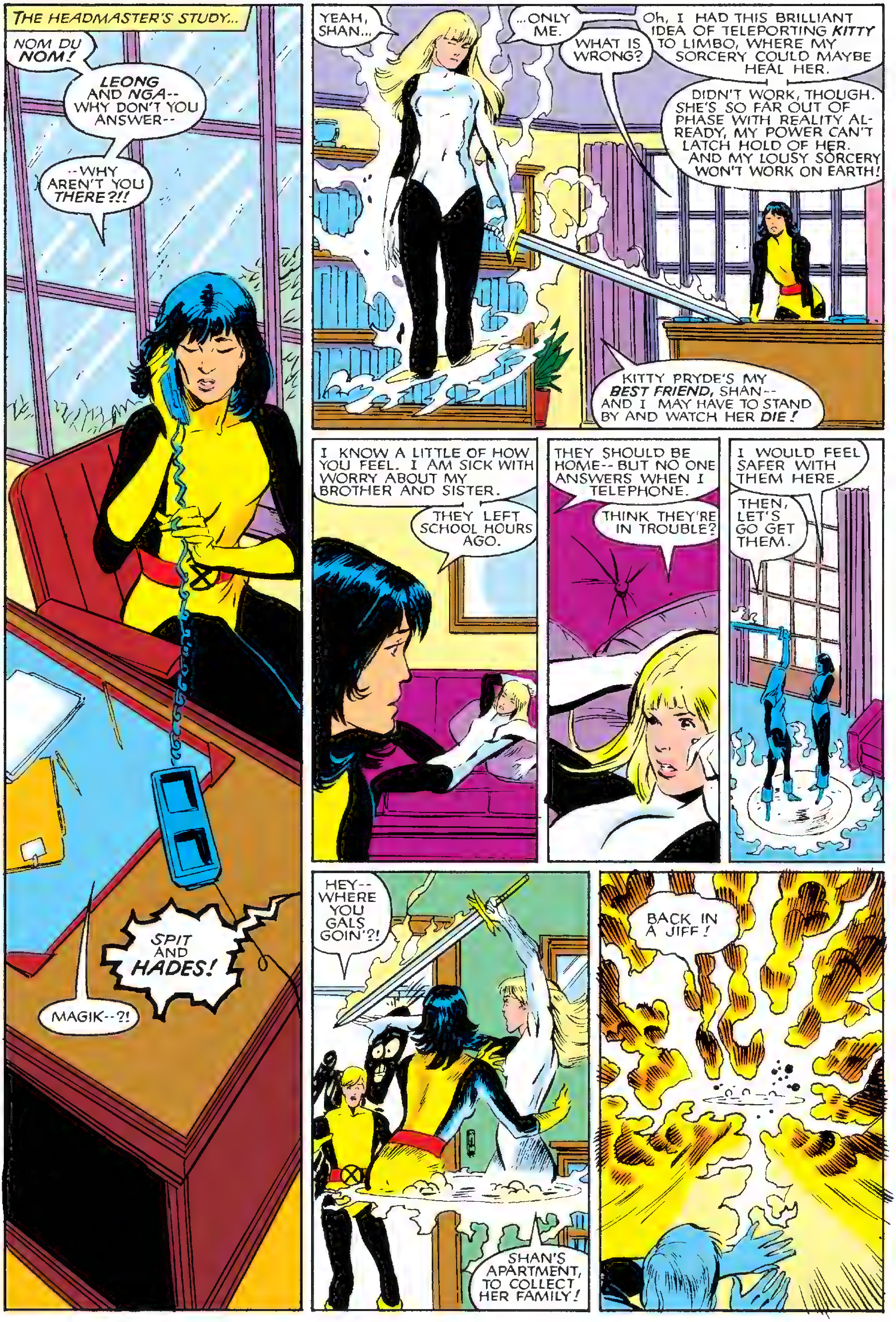

MEANWHILE, IN THE KITCHEN...
LOUSY, ROTTEN, STINKING SWINE!
WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS, ANYWAY?!
I CAN'T MAKE A MISTAKE-- oh, NO-- BUT WHAT ABOUT HIM?! SUPPOSED TO BE OUR TEACHER-- TO SET US AN EXAMPLE-- YET ALL HE EVER DOES IS MAKE MISTAKES!
HE PUNISHES US, WHO PUNISHES HIM?!
WHAT'S THIS?!
RAHNE PLAYING "HAPPY HOMEMAKER?"
LEAVE THAT BE!
THAT FOOD'S NA' FOR US, 'BERTO, BUT FOR THOSE DOWNSTAIRS WHO TRULY NEED IT.
SLAP!
SILLY, STUPID GIRL--
--THIS IS THE FINAL STRAW!
KRASH!
YOU UNCARING SPALEEN-- I'M SICK OF YOU ALWAYS THINKING OF YUIRSELF! 'TIS PAST TIME SOMEONE TAUGHT YOU A LESSON!
SAM! IT'S RAHNE-- OUR SPECIAL MINDLINK JUST ACTIVATED--THAT MEANS SHE JUST TRANSFORMED INTO HER WEREWOLF-SELF--
--SAM, SHE AND BOBBY ARE FIGHTING!
WOLFSBANE! SUNSPOT!!
BREAK IT UP!!

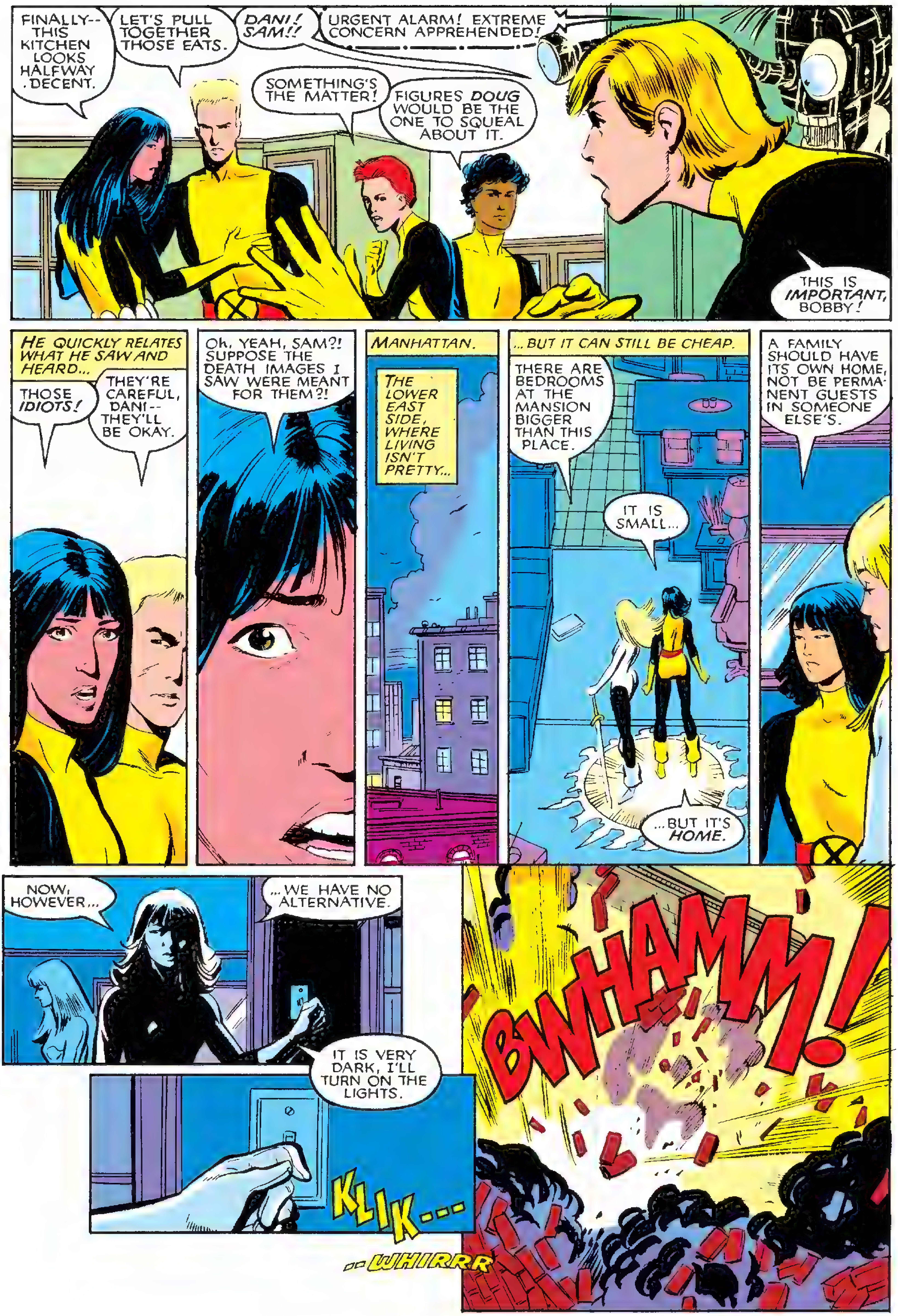

'BERTO STARTED IT!
IT'S *HER* FAULT!
SHUT *UP*--
--THE *PAIR* OF YOU!
HOW *DARE* YOU BEHAVE LIKE THIS-- NO WONDER WE'RE CALLED *"X-BABIES!"*
PEOPLE ARE HURT AND *DYING* DOWNSTAIRS, AND ALL YOU CAN DO IS PICK SOME STUPID SCRAP. THANKS A WHOLE HECKUVA LOT, SOME HELP YOU ARE.

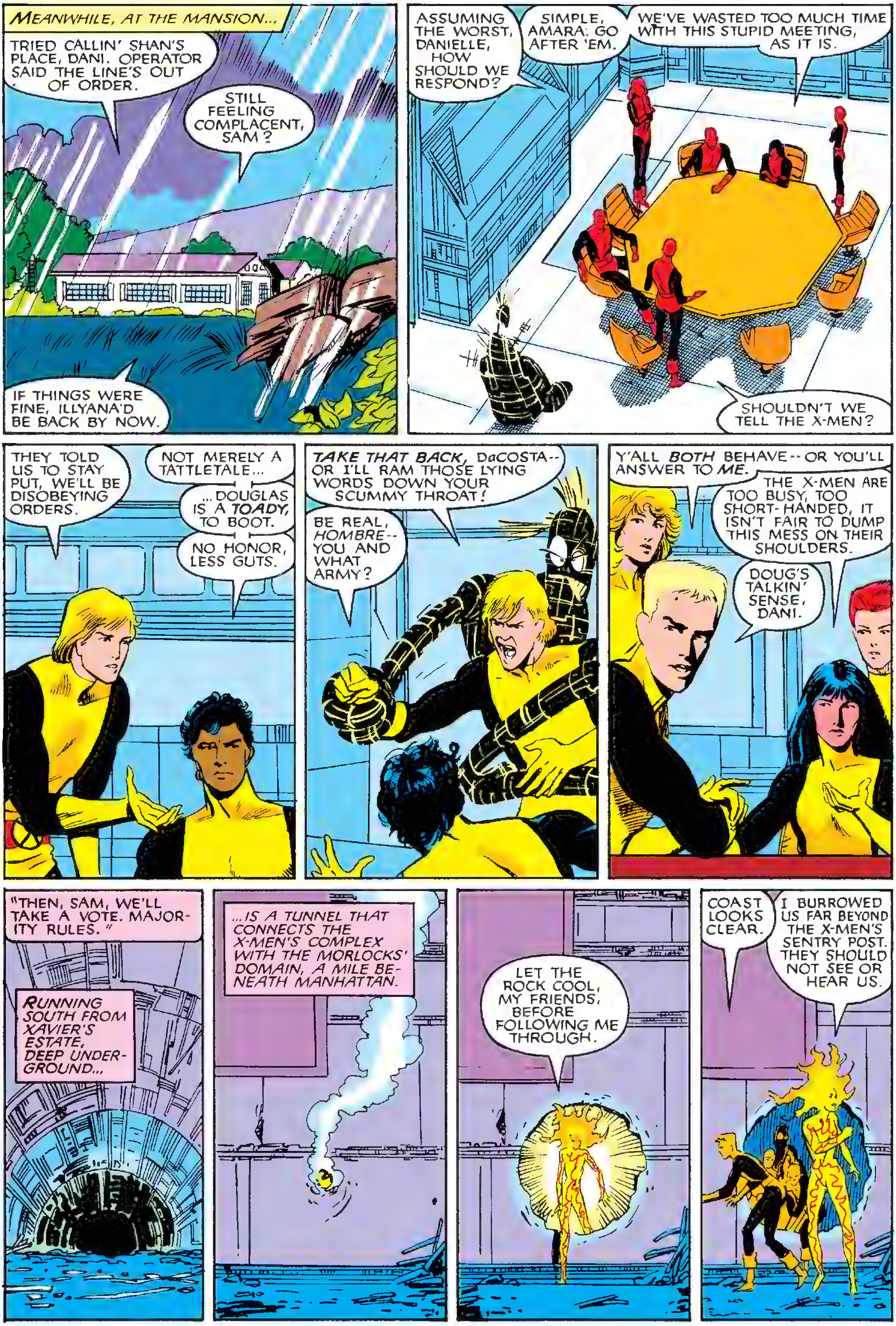

DANI, I...
...I'M SORRY.
EASY TO SAY, RAHNE.
I *WANTED* TO HELP, DANI, MORE THAN ANYTHING--
--BUT MAGNETO WOULDN'T LET ME!
THE NEW MUTANTS HAVE PROVEN OUR WORTH, TIME AND AGAIN--ONLY EVERYONE KEEPS TREATING US LIKE KIDS!
MAYBE, BOBBY, BECAUSE SOME OF US INSIST ON ACTING THE PART.
DOIN' SOMETHIN' BIG OR SMALL, IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, AIN'T IMPORTANT, BOBBY. IT'S THE *HELPING* THAT MATTERS.
C'MON, HOW 'BOUT WE PUT THIS MESS TO RIGHT, AN' THEN MAKE A NEW BATCH OF SANDWICHES. FOLKS DOWNSTAIRS COULD PROBABLY USE 'EM.

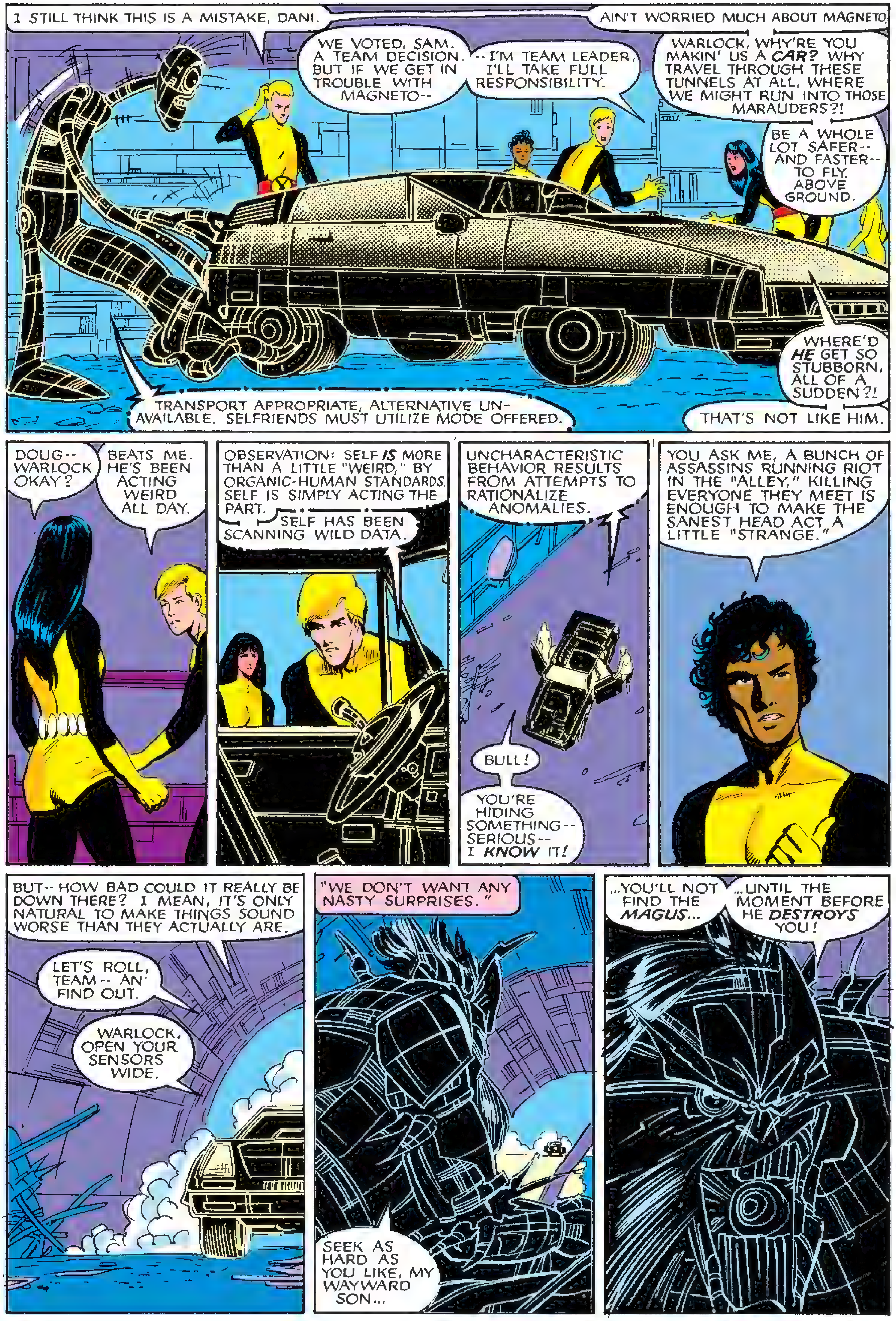

*ON THE BACK PORCH...*
TAKING A BREAK, BUDDY?
PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS??
CYPHER TO WARLOCK-- ANYBODY HOME???
AFFIRMATIVE.
WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT?

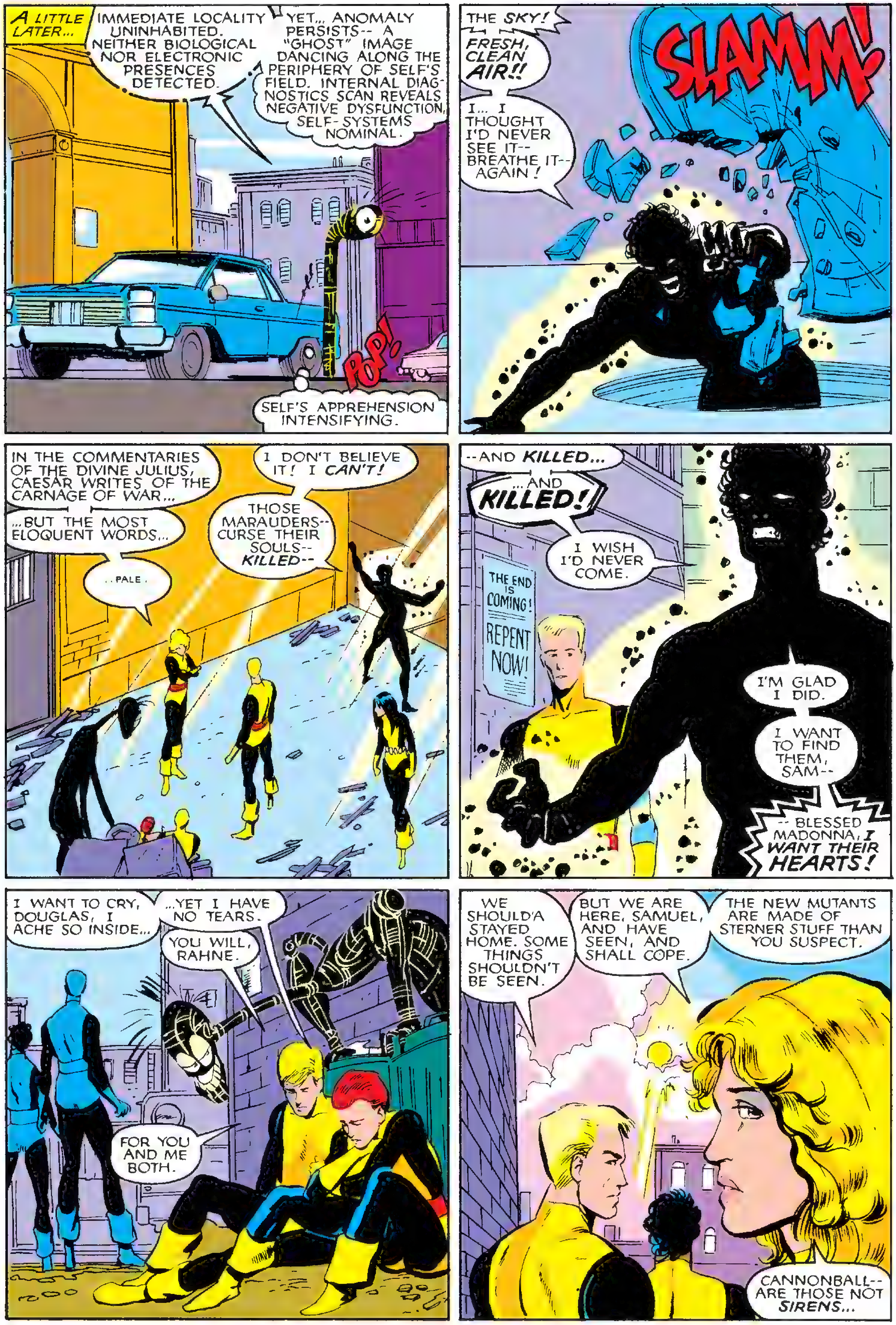

NOTHING.
LIKE HECK. I'VE NEVER SEEN 'LOCK MANIFEST SO MANY SENSORS. HE'S SCANNING FOR SOMETHING--BUT *WHAT?!*
AND WHY WON'T HE TALK ABOUT IT?!?

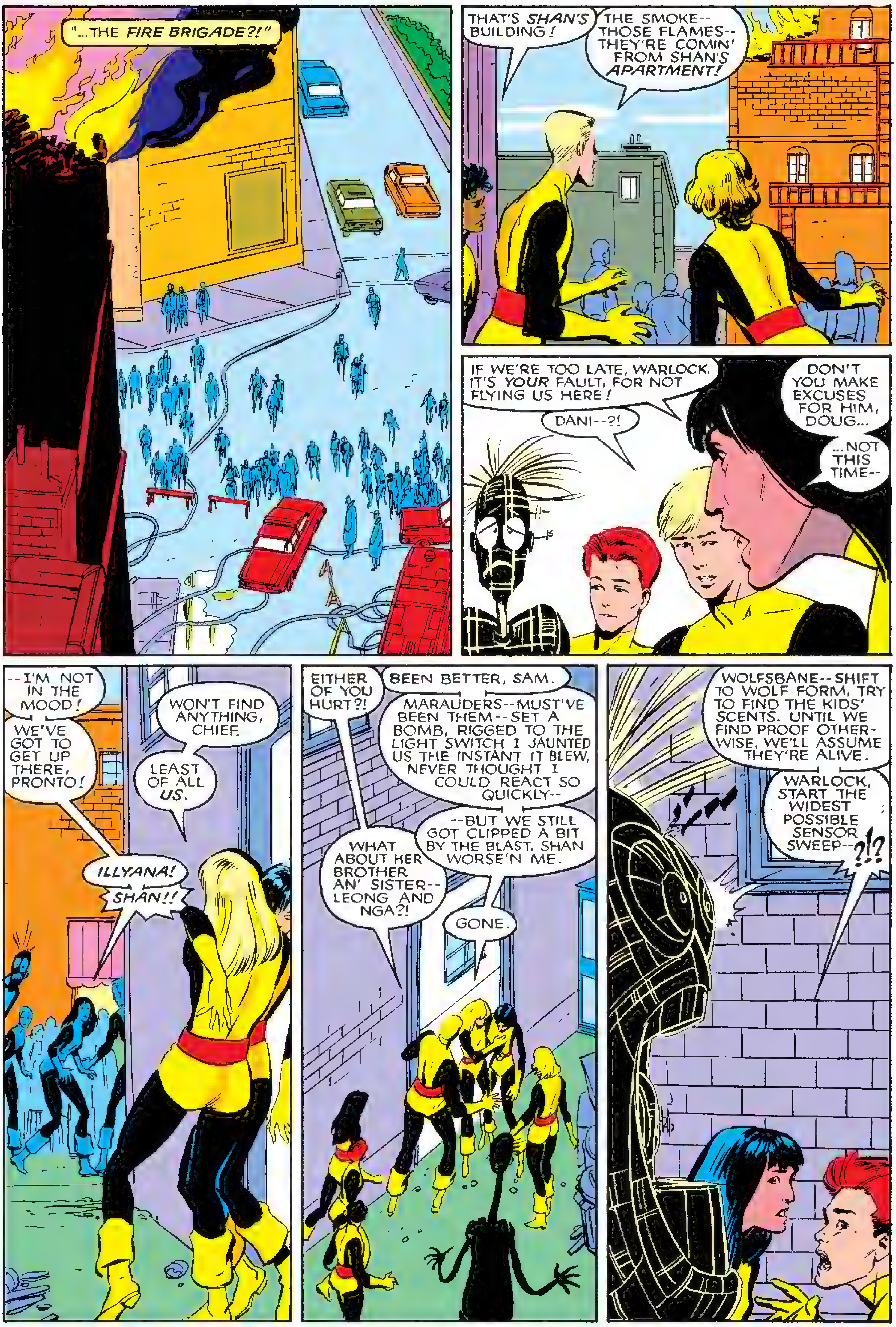

THE HEADMASTER'S STUDY...
NOM DU NOM!
LEONG AND NGA--WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER--
--WHY AREN'T YOU THERE?!!
SPIT AND HADES!
MAGIK--?!
YEAH, SHAN...
...ONLY ME.
WHAT IS WRONG?
Oh, I HAD THIS BRILLIANT IDEA OF TELEPORTING KITTY TO LIMBO, WHERE MY SORCERY COULD MAYBE HEAL HER.
DIDN'T WORK, THOUGH. SHE'S SO FAR OUT OF PHASE WITH REALITY ALREADY, MY POWER CAN'T LATCH HOLD OF HER. AND MY LOUSY SORCERY WON'T WORK ON EARTH!
KITTY PRYDE'S MY BEST FRIEND, SHAN--AND I MAY HAVE TO STAND BY AND WATCH HER DIE!
I KNOW A LITTLE OF HOW YOU FEEL. I AM SICK WITH WORRY ABOUT MY BROTHER AND SISTER.
THEY LEFT SCHOOL HOURS AGO.
THEY SHOULD BE HOME--BUT NO ONE ANSWERS WHEN I TELEPHONE.
THINK THEY'RE IN TROUBLE?
I WOULD FEEL SAFER WITH THEM HERE.
THEN, LET'S GO GET THEM.
HEY--WHERE YOU GALS GOIN'?!
SHAN'S APARTMENT, TO COLLECT HER FAMILY!
BACK IN A JIFF!

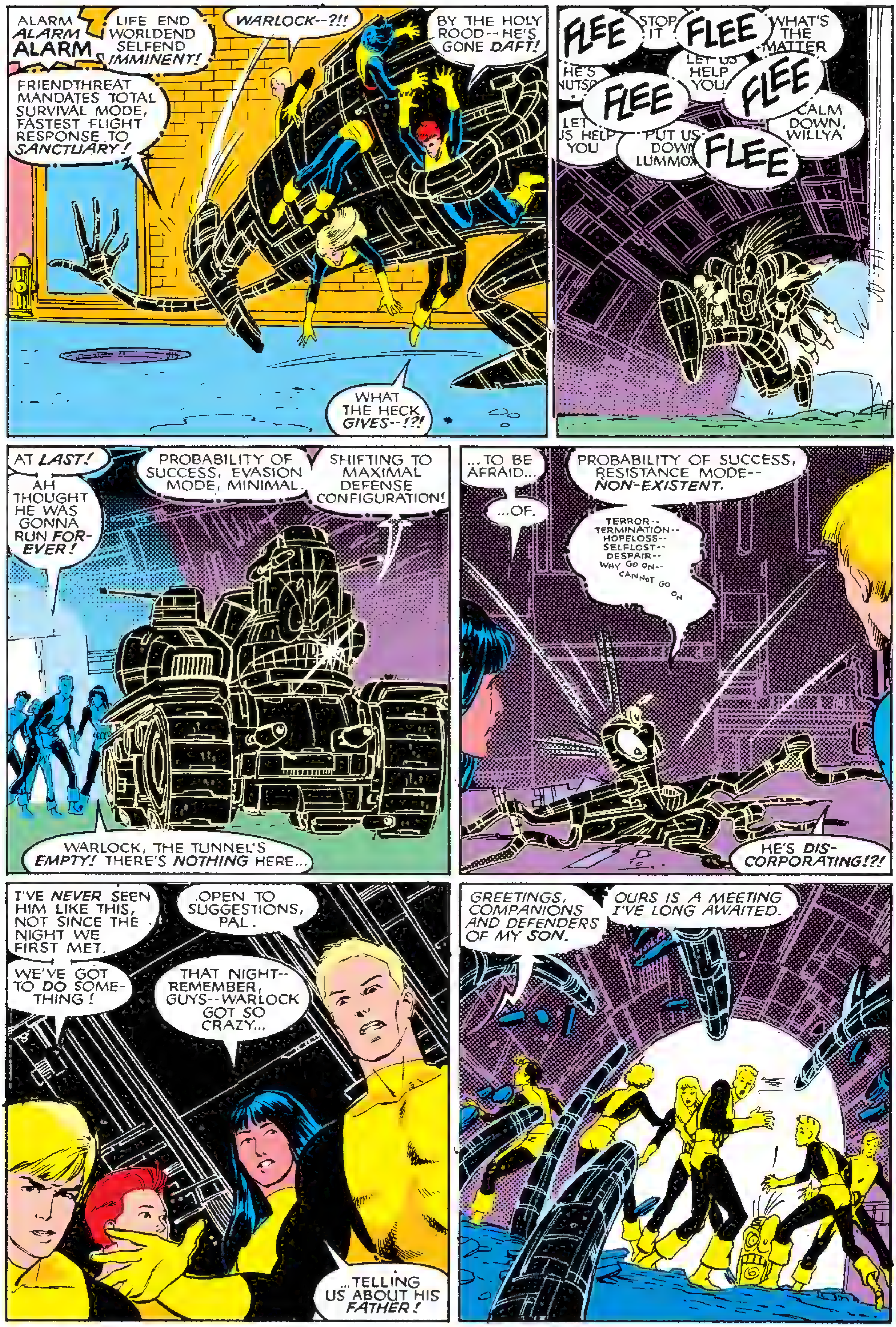

FINALLY-- THIS KITCHEN LOOKS HALFWAY DECENT.
LET'S PULL TOGETHER THOSE EATS.
DANI! SAM!!
URGENT ALARM! EXTREME CONCERN APPREHENDED!
SOMETHING'S THE MATTER!
FIGURES DOUG WOULD BE THE ONE TO SQUEAL ABOUT IT.
THIS IS IMPORTANT, BOBBY!
HE QUICKLY RELATES WHAT HE SAW AND HEARD...
THOSE IDIOTS!
THEY'RE CAREFUL, DANI-- THEY'LL BE OKAY.
Oh, YEAH, SAM?! SUPPOSE THE DEATH IMAGES I SAW WERE MEANT FOR THEM?!
MANHATTAN.
THE LOWER EAST SIDE, WHERE LIVING ISN'T PRETTY...
...BUT IT CAN STILL BE CHEAP.
THERE ARE BEDROOMS AT THE MANSION BIGGER THAN THIS PLACE.
IT IS SMALL...
...BUT IT'S HOME.
A FAMILY SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN HOME, NOT BE PERMANENT GUESTS IN SOMEONE ELSE'S.
NOW, HOWEVER...
...WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE.
IT IS VERY DARK, I'LL TURN ON THE LIGHTS.
KLIK...
--WHIRRR
BWHAMM!

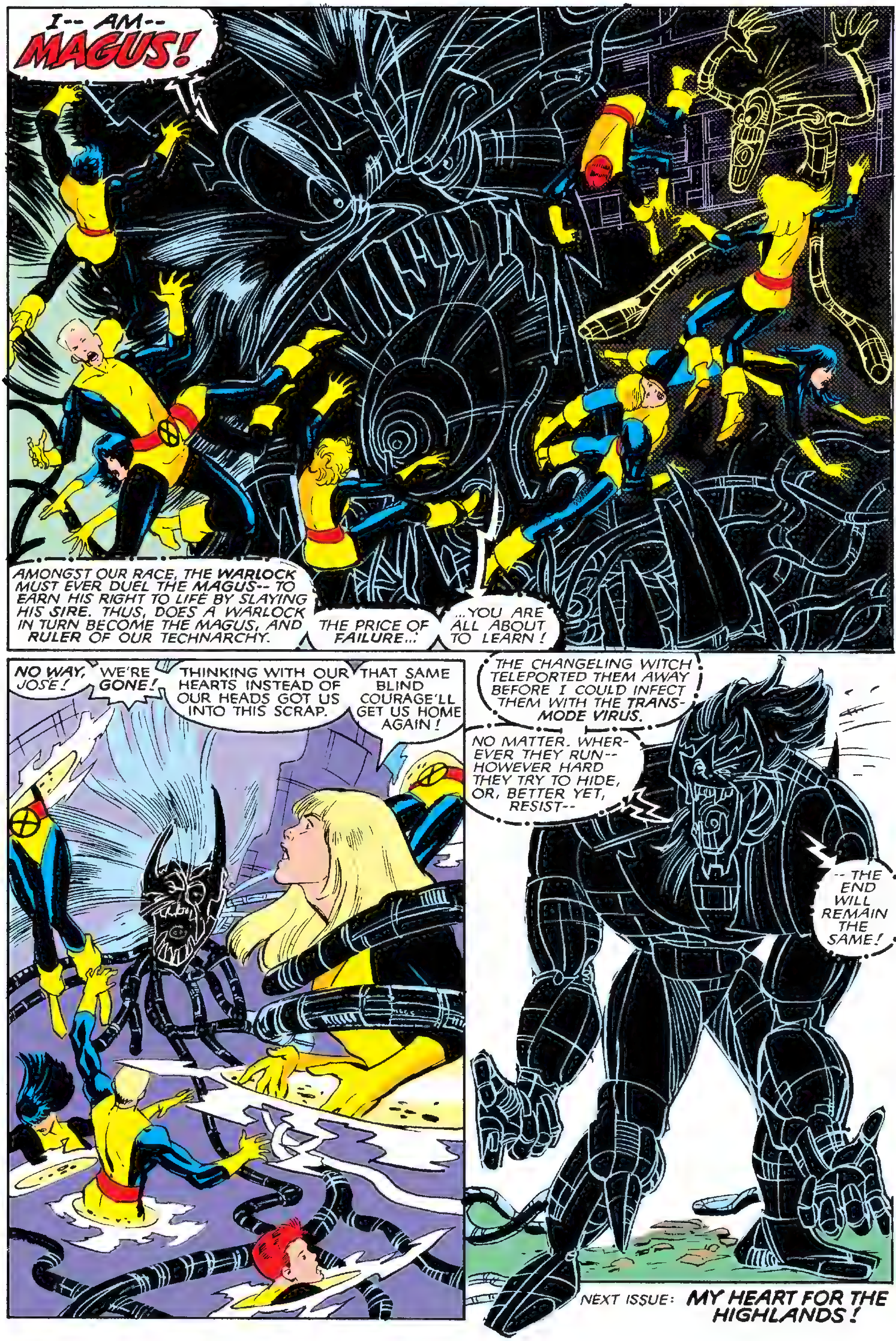

MEANWHILE, AT THE MANSION...
TRIED CALLIN' SHAN'S PLACE, DANI. OPERATOR SAID THE LINE'S OUT OF ORDER.
STILL FEELING COMPLACENT, SAM?
IF THINGS WERE FINE, ILLYANA'D BE BACK BY NOW.
ASSUMING THE WORST, DANIELLE, HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND?
SIMPLE, AMARA: GO AFTER 'EM.
WE'VE WASTED TOO MUCH TIME WITH THIS STUPID MEETING, AS IT IS.
SHOULDN'T WE TELL THE X-MEN?
THEY TOLD US TO STAY PUT, WE'LL BE DISOBEYING ORDERS.
NOT MERELY A TATTLETALE...
...DOUGLAS IS A TOADY, TO BOOT.
NO HONOR, LESS GUTS.
TAKE THAT BACK, DaCOSTA -- OR I'LL RAM THOSE LYING WORDS DOWN YOUR SCUMMY THROAT!
BE REAL, HOMBRE -- YOU AND WHAT ARMY?
Y'ALL BOTH BEHAVE -- OR YOU'LL ANSWER TO ME.
THE X-MEN ARE TOO BUSY, TOO SHORT-HANDED, IT ISN'T FAIR TO DUMP THIS MESS ON THEIR SHOULDERS.
DOUG'S TALKIN' SENSE, DANI.
"THEN, SAM, WE'LL TAKE A VOTE. MAJORITY RULES."
RUNNING SOUTH FROM XAVIER'S ESTATE, DEEP UNDERGROUND...
...IS A TUNNEL THAT CONNECTS THE X-MEN'S COMPLEX WITH THE MORLOCKS' DOMAIN, A MILE BENEATH MANHATTAN.
LET THE ROCK COOL, MY FRIENDS, BEFORE FOLLOWING ME THROUGH.
COAST LOOKS CLEAR.
I BURROWED US FAR BEYOND THE X-MEN'S SENTRY POST. THEY SHOULD NOT SEE OR HEAR US.


I STILL THINK THIS IS A MISTAKE, DANI.
WE VOTED, SAM. A TEAM DECISION. BUT IF WE GET IN TROUBLE WITH MAGNETO--
--I'M TEAM LEADER, I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY.
AIN'T WORRIED MUCH ABOUT MAGNETO.
WARLOCK, WHY'RE YOU MAKIN' US A *CAR?* WHY TRAVEL THROUGH THESE TUNNELS AT ALL, WHERE WE MIGHT RUN INTO THOSE MARAUDERS?!
BE A WHOLE LOT SAFER--AND FASTER--TO FLY ABOVE GROUND.
TRANSPORT APPROPRIATE, ALTERNATIVE UNAVAILABLE. SELFRIENDS MUST UTILIZE MODE OFFERED.
WHERE'D *HE* GET SO STUBBORN, ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
THAT'S NOT LIKE HIM.
DOUG--WARLOCK OKAY?
BEATS ME. HE'S BEEN ACTING WEIRD ALL DAY.
OBSERVATION: SELF *IS* MORE THAN A LITTLE "WEIRD," BY ORGANIC-HUMAN STANDARDS. SELF IS SIMPLY ACTING THE PART.
SELF HAS BEEN SCANNING WILD DATA.
UNCHARACTERISTIC BEHAVIOR RESULTS FROM ATTEMPTS TO RATIONALIZE ANOMALIES.
BULL!
YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING--SERIOUS--I *KNOW* IT!
YOU ASK ME, A BUNCH OF ASSASSINS RUNNING RIOT IN THE "ALLEY," KILLING EVERYONE THEY MEET IS ENOUGH TO MAKE THE SANEST HEAD ACT A LITTLE "STRANGE."
BUT--HOW BAD COULD IT REALLY BE DOWN THERE? I MEAN, IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO MAKE THINGS SOUND WORSE THAN THEY ACTUALLY ARE.
LET'S ROLL, TEAM--AN' FIND OUT.
WARLOCK, OPEN YOUR SENSORS WIDE.
"WE DON'T WANT ANY NASTY SURPRISES."
SEEK AS HARD AS YOU LIKE, MY WAYWARD SON...
...YOU'LL NOT FIND THE *MAGUS*...
...UNTIL THE MOMENT BEFORE HE *DESTROYS* YOU!


A LITTLE LATER...
IMMEDIATE LOCALITY UNINHABITED. NEITHER BIOLOGICAL NOR ELECTRONIC PRESENCES DETECTED.
YET... ANOMALY PERSISTS-- A "GHOST" IMAGE DANCING ALONG THE PERIPHERY OF SELF'S FIELD. INTERNAL DIAGNOSTICS SCAN REVEALS NEGATIVE DYSFUNCTION, SELF-SYSTEMS NOMINAL.
POP!
SELF'S APPREHENSION INTENSIFYING.
SLAMM!
THE SKY!
FRESH, CLEAN AIR!!
I... I THOUGHT I'D NEVER SEE IT-- BREATHE IT-- AGAIN!
IN THE COMMENTARIES OF THE DIVINE JULIUS, CAESAR WRITES OF THE CARNAGE OF WAR...
...BUT THE MOST ELOQUENT WORDS...
...PALE.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! I CAN'T!
THOSE MARAUDERS-- CURSE THEIR SOULS-- KILLED--
--AND KILLED...
...AND KILLED!
I WISH I'D NEVER COME.
THE END IS COMING! REPENT NOW!
I'M GLAD I DID.
I WANT TO FIND THEM, SAM--
-- BLESSED MADONNA, I WANT THEIR HEARTS!
I WANT TO CRY, DOUGLAS, I ACHE SO INSIDE...
...YET I HAVE NO TEARS.
YOU WILL, RAHNE.
FOR YOU AND ME BOTH.
WE SHOULD'A STAYED HOME. SOME THINGS SHOULDN'T BE SEEN.
BUT WE ARE HERE, SAMUEL, AND HAVE SEEN, AND SHALL COPE.
THE NEW MUTANTS ARE MADE OF STERNER STUFF THAN YOU SUSPECT.
CANNONBALL-- ARE THOSE NOT SIRENS...


"...THE *FIRE BRIGADE?!*"
THAT'S *SHAN'S* BUILDING!
THE SMOKE-- THOSE FLAMES-- THEY'RE COMIN' FROM SHAN'S *APARTMENT!*
IF WE'RE TOO LATE, WARLOCK, IT'S *YOUR* FAULT, FOR NOT FLYING US HERE!
DANI--?!
DON'T YOU MAKE EXCUSES FOR HIM, DOUG...
...NOT THIS TIME--
--I'M NOT IN THE MOOD!
WE'VE GOT TO GET UP THERE, PRONTO!
WON'T FIND ANYTHING, CHIEF.
LEAST OF ALL *US*.
*ILLYANA!*
*SHAN!!*
EITHER OF YOU HURT?!
BEEN BETTER, SAM.
MARAUDERS--MUST'VE BEEN THEM--SET A BOMB, RIGGED TO THE LIGHT SWITCH. I JAUNTED US THE INSTANT IT BLEW. NEVER THOUGHT I COULD REACT SO QUICKLY--
--BUT WE STILL GOT CLIPPED A BIT BY THE BLAST. SHAN WORSE'N ME.
WHAT ABOUT HER BROTHER AN' SISTER--LEONG AND NGA?!
GONE.
WOLFSBANE--SHIFT TO WOLF FORM, TRY TO FIND THE KIDS' SCENTS. UNTIL WE FIND PROOF OTHERWISE, WE'LL ASSUME THEY'RE ALIVE.
WARLOCK, START THE WIDEST POSSIBLE SENSOR SWEEP--?!?


ALARM ALARM ALARM
LIFE END WORLDEND SELFEND *IMMINENT!*
FRIENDTHREAT MANDATES TOTAL SURVIVAL MODE, FASTEST FLIGHT RESPONSE TO *SANCTUARY!*
*WARLOCK--?!!*
BY THE HOLY ROOD--HE'S GONE *DAFT!*
WHAT THE HECK *GIVES--!?!*
FLEE
STOP IT
FLEE
WHAT'S THE MATTER
HE'S NUTSO
LET US HELP YOU
FLEE
FLEE
LET US HELP YOU
CALM DOWN, WILLYA
PUT US DOWN LUMMOX
FLEE
AT *LAST!*
AH THOUGHT HE WAS GONNA RUN *FOREVER!*
PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS, EVASION MODE, MINIMAL.
SHIFTING TO MAXIMAL DEFENSE CONFIGURATION!
WARLOCK, THE TUNNEL'S *EMPTY!* THERE'S *NOTHING* HERE...
...TO BE AFRAID...
...OF.
PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS, RESISTANCE MODE--*NON-EXISTENT.*
TERROR--TERMINATION--HOPELOSS--SELFLOST--DESPAIR--WHY GO ON--CANNOT GO ON
HE'S *DISCORPORATING!?!*
I'VE *NEVER* SEEN HIM LIKE THIS, NOT SINCE THE NIGHT WE FIRST MET.
...OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS, PAL.
WE'VE GOT TO *DO* SOMETHING!
THAT NIGHT--REMEMBER, GUYS--WARLOCK GOT SO CRAZY...
...TELLING US ABOUT HIS *FATHER!*
*GREETINGS, COMPANIONS AND DEFENDERS OF MY SON.*
*OURS IS A MEETING I'VE LONG AWAITED.*


I-- AM-- MAGUS!
AMONGST OUR RACE, THE **WARLOCK** MUST EVER DUEL THE **MAGUS**-- TO EARN HIS RIGHT TO LIFE BY SLAYING HIS **SIRE**. THUS, DOES A WARLOCK IN TURN BECOME THE MAGUS, AND **RULER** OF OUR TECHNARCHY.
THE PRICE OF FAILURE...
...YOU ARE ALL ABOUT TO LEARN!
NO WAY, JOSÉ!
WE'RE **GONE**!
THINKING WITH OUR HEARTS INSTEAD OF OUR HEADS GOT US INTO THIS SCRAP.
THAT SAME BLIND COURAGE'LL GET US HOME AGAIN!
THE CHANGELING WITCH TELEPORTED THEM AWAY BEFORE I COULD INFECT THEM WITH THE **TRANSMODE VIRUS**.
NO MATTER. WHEREVER THEY RUN-- HOWEVER HARD THEY TRY TO HIDE, OR, BETTER YET, RESIST--
-- THE END WILL REMAIN THE SAME!

NEXT ISSUE: **MY HEART FOR THE HIGHLANDS!**

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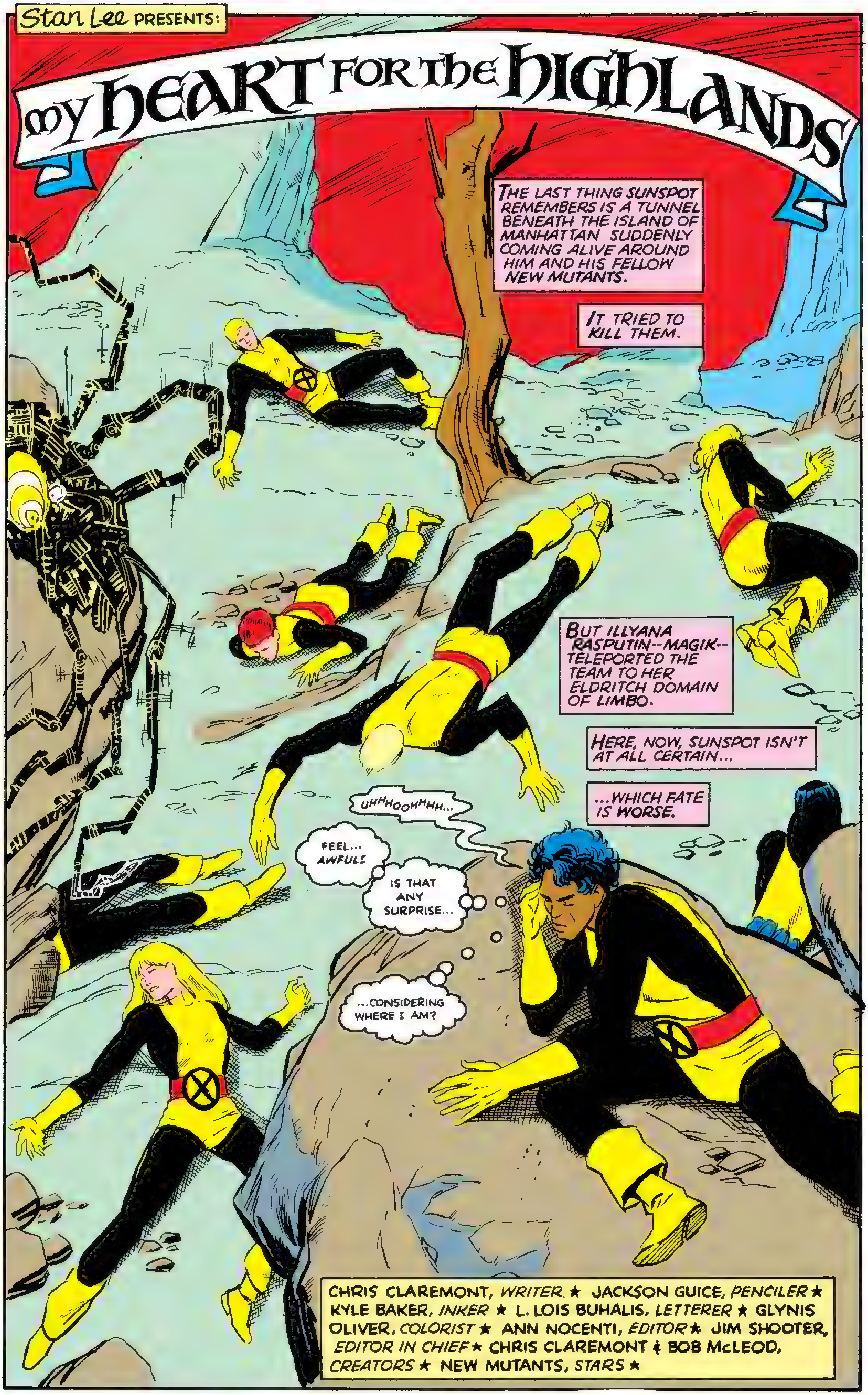
Stan Lee PRESENTS:
MY HEART FOR THE HIGHLANDS
THE LAST THING SUNSPOT REMEMBERS IS A TUNNEL BENEATH THE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN SUDDENLY COMING ALIVE AROUND HIM AND HIS FELLOW NEW MUTANTS.
IT TRIED TO KILL THEM.
BUT ILLYANA RASPUTIN--MAGIK--TELEPORTED THE TEAM TO HER ELDRITCH DOMAIN OF LIMBO.
HERE, NOW, SUNSPOT ISN'T AT ALL CERTAIN...
...WHICH FATE IS WORSE.
UHHHOOHHHH...
FEEL... AWFUL!
IS THAT ANY SURPRISE...
...CONSIDERING WHERE I AM?
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER ★ JACKSON GUICE, PENCILER ★ KYLE BAKER, INKER ★ L. LOIS BUHALIS, LETTERER ★ GLYNIS OLIVER, COLORIST ★ ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR ★ JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF ★ CHRIS CLAREMONT & BOB McLEOD, CREATORS ★ NEW MUTANTS, STARS ★

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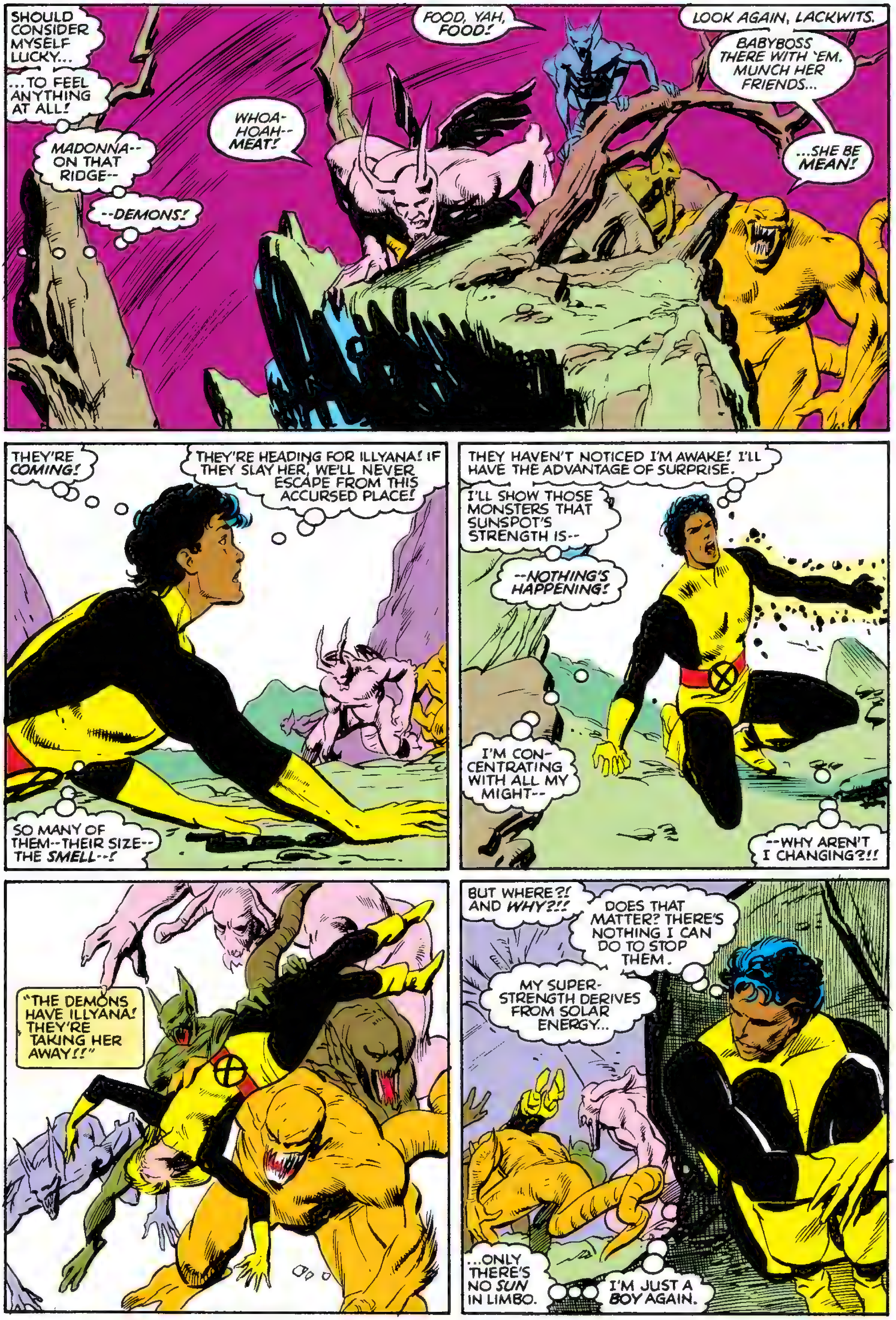
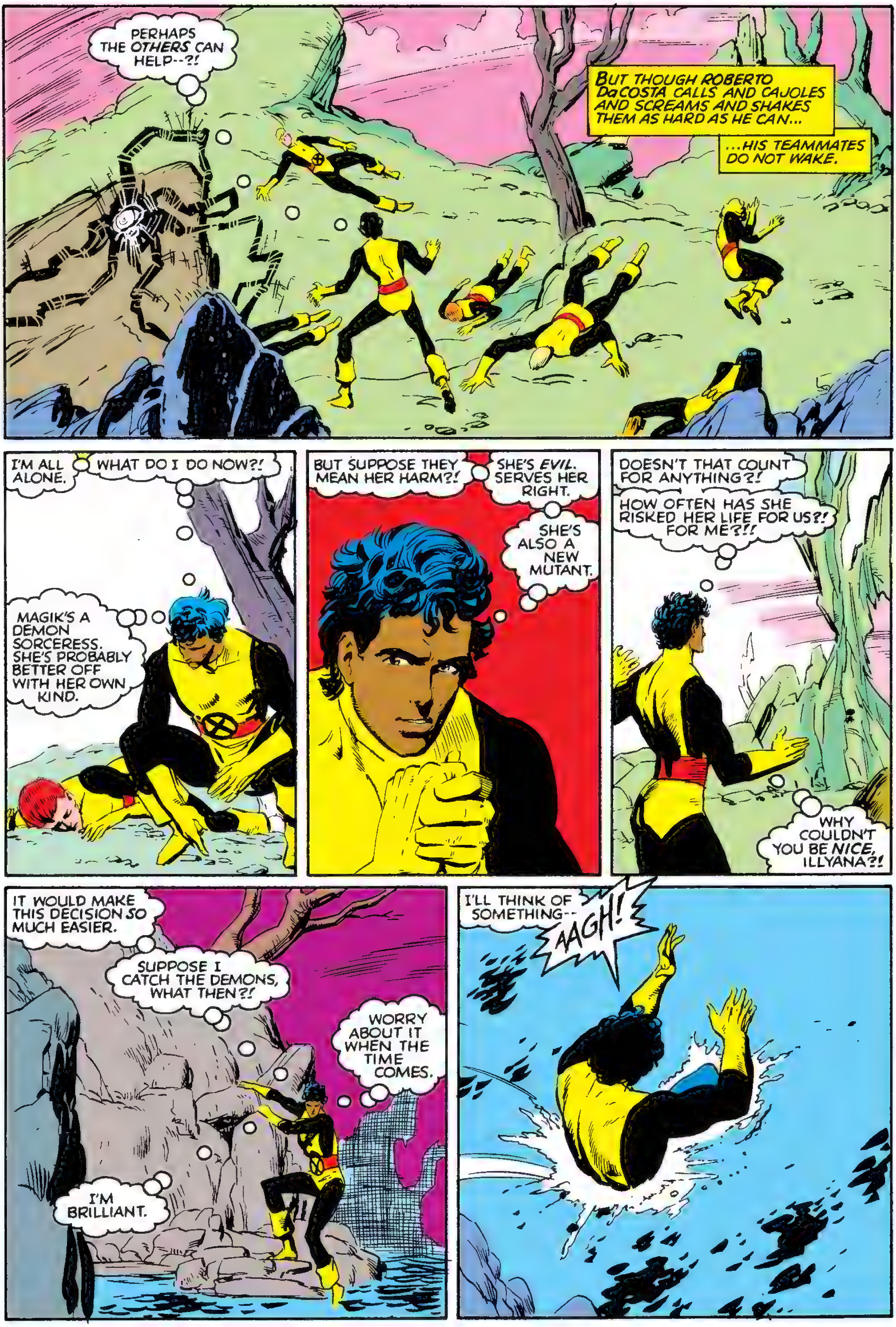
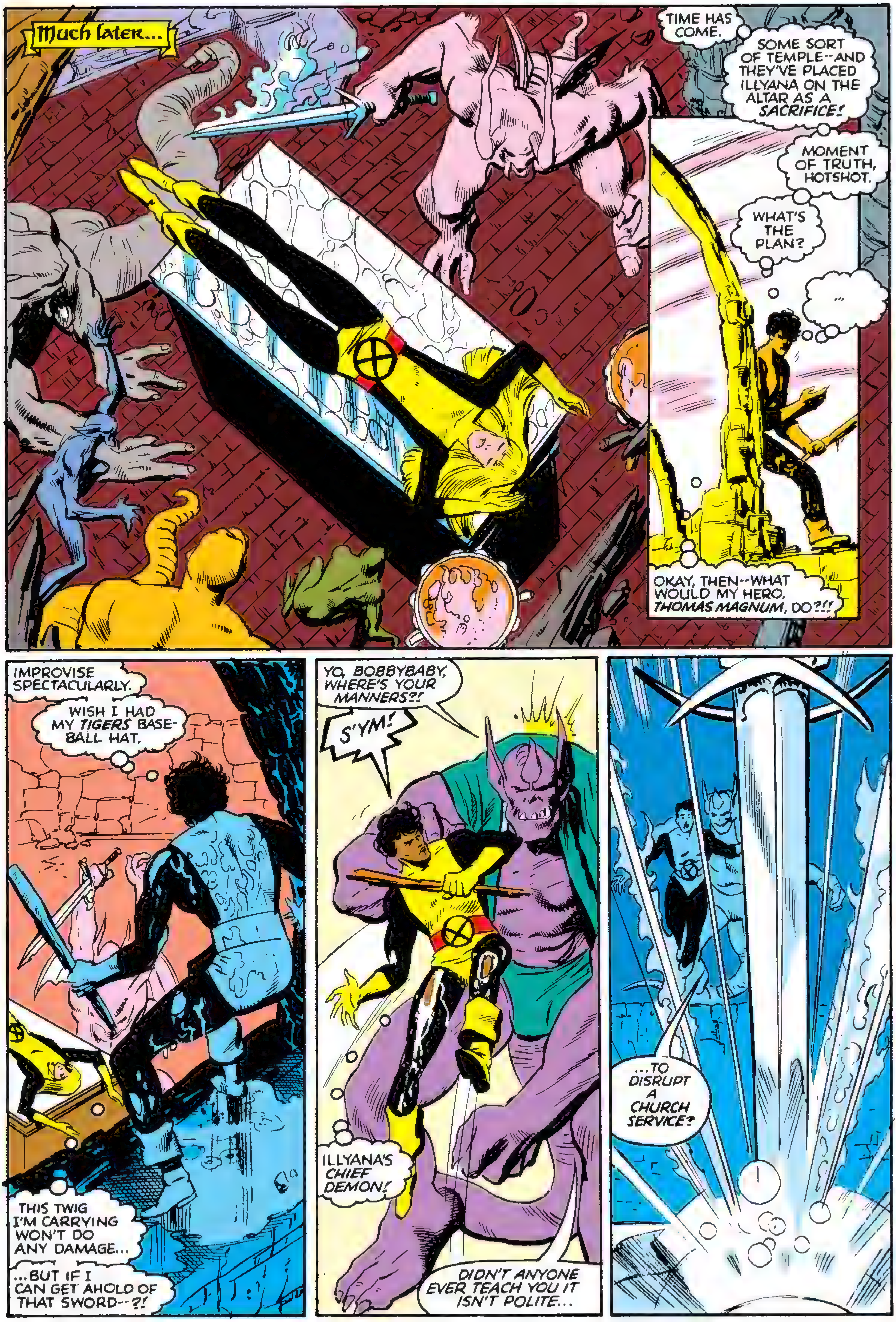
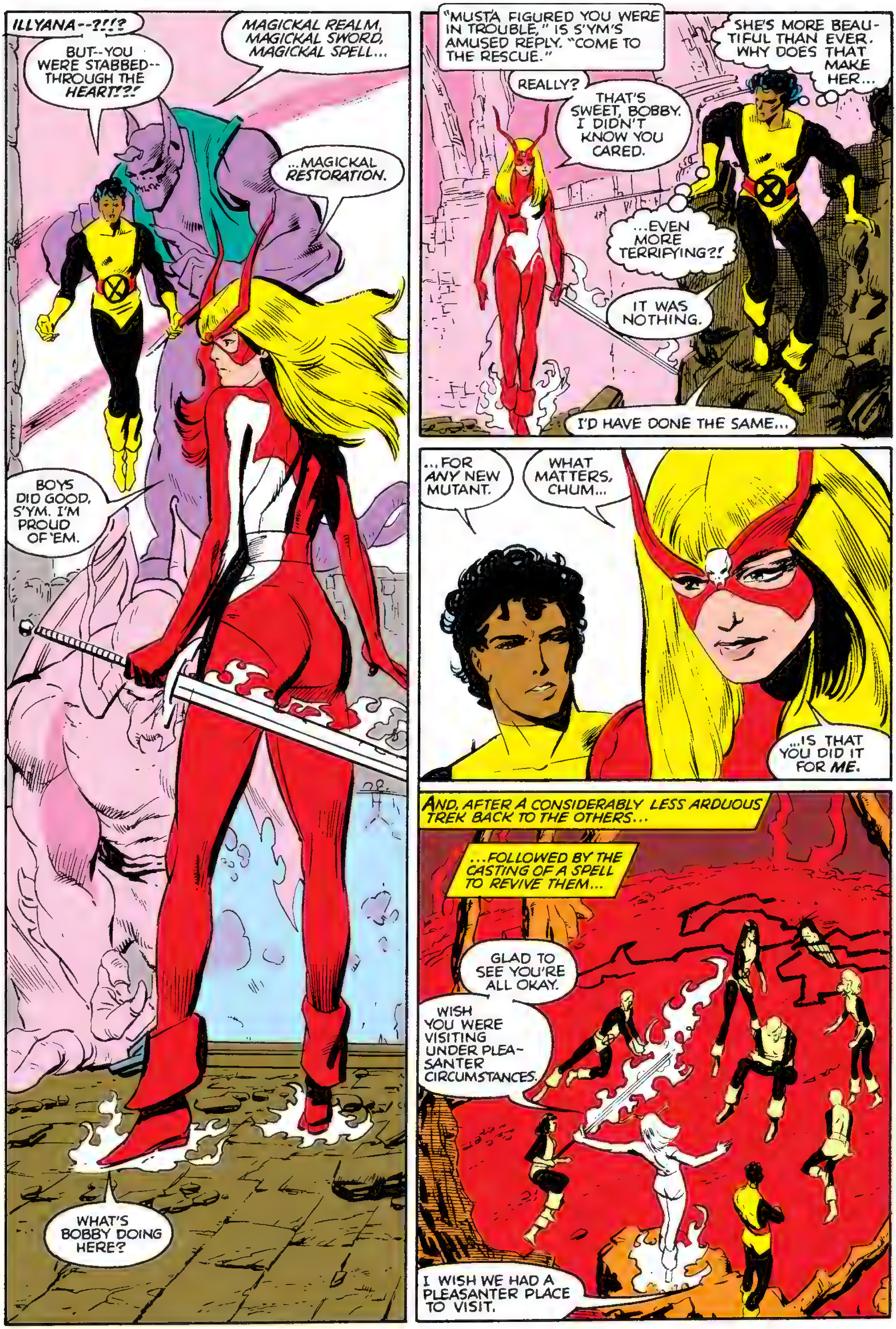
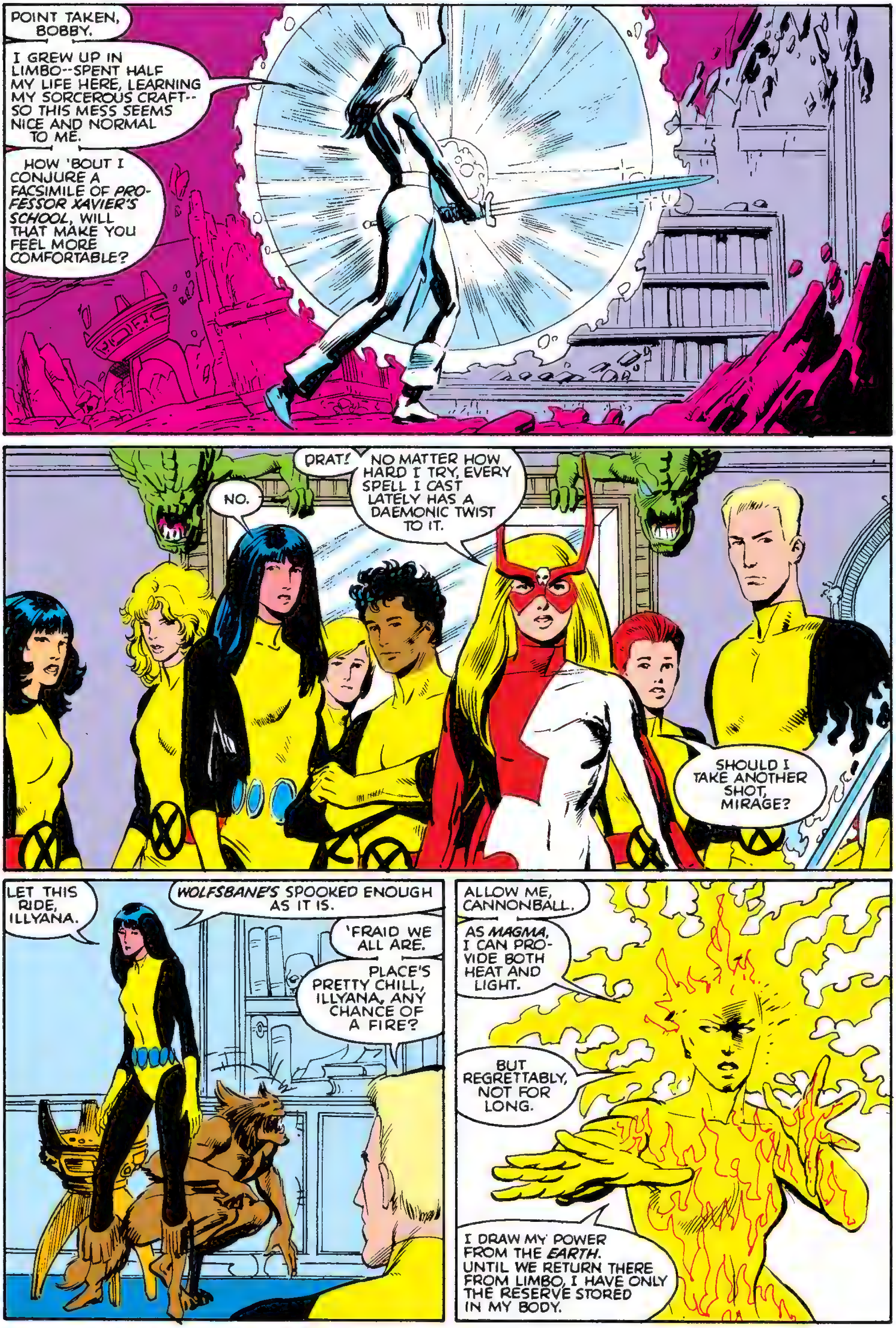
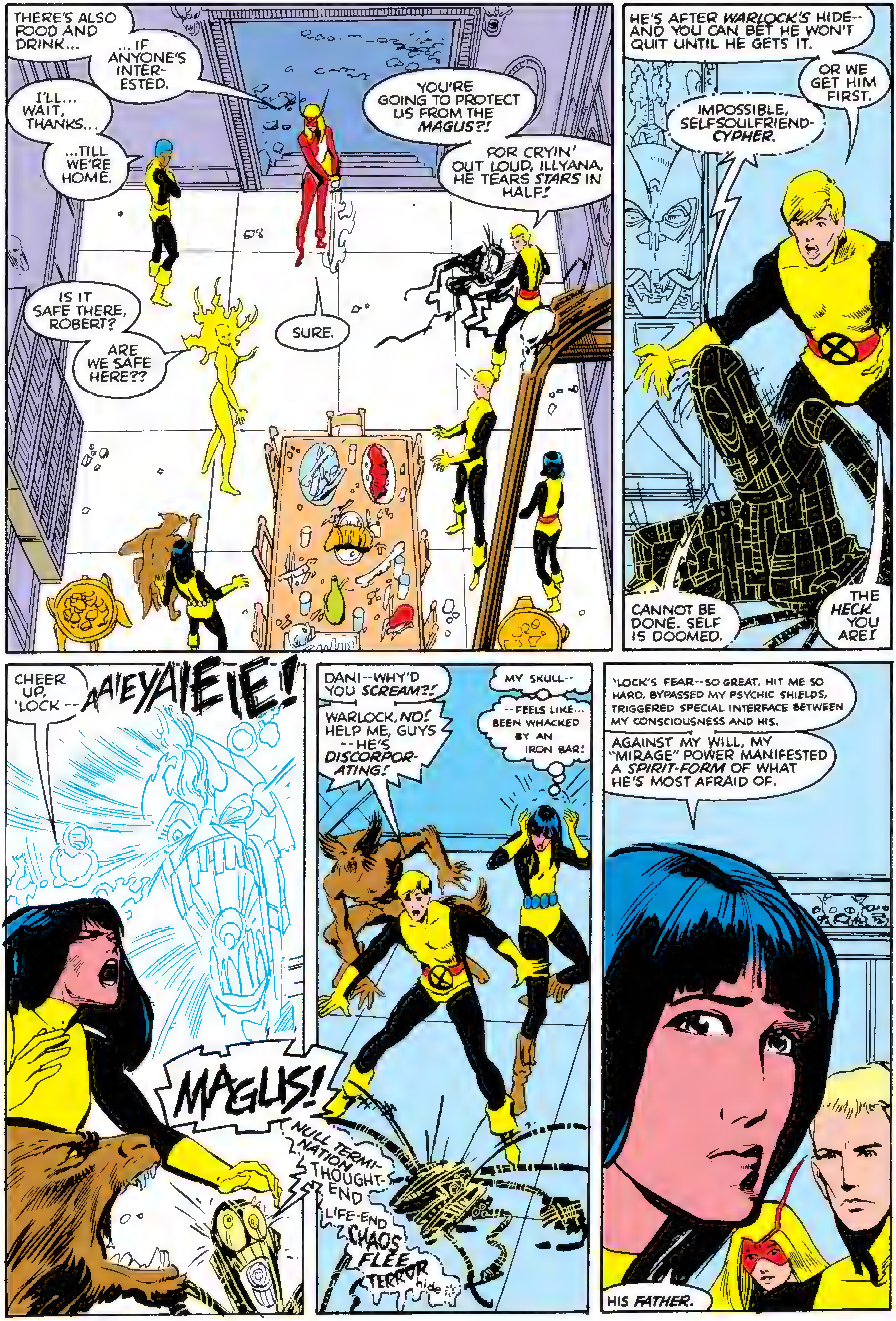

SHOULD CONSIDER MYSELF LUCKY...
...TO FEEL ANYTHING AT ALL!
MADONNA-- ON THAT RIDGE--
--DEMONS!
WHOA-HOAH-- MEAT!
FOOD, YAH, FOOD!
LOOK AGAIN, LACKWITS.
BABYBOSS THERE WITH 'EM. MUNCH HER FRIENDS...
...SHE BE MEAN!
THEY'RE COMING!
THEY'RE HEADING FOR ILLYANA! IF THEY SLAY HER, WE'LL NEVER ESCAPE FROM THIS ACCURSED PLACE!
SO MANY OF THEM--THEIR SIZE-- THE SMELL--!
THEY HAVEN'T NOTICED I'M AWAKE! I'LL HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE.
I'LL SHOW THOSE MONSTERS THAT SUNSPOT'S STRENGTH IS--
--NOTHING'S HAPPENING!
I'M CONCENTRATING WITH ALL MY MIGHT--
--WHY AREN'T I CHANGING?!!
"THE DEMONS HAVE ILLYANA! THEY'RE TAKING HER AWAY!!"
BUT WHERE?! AND WHY?!!
DOES THAT MATTER? THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO STOP THEM.
MY SUPER-STRENGTH DERIVES FROM SOLAR ENERGY...
...ONLY THERE'S NO SUN IN LIMBO.
I'M JUST A BOY AGAIN.

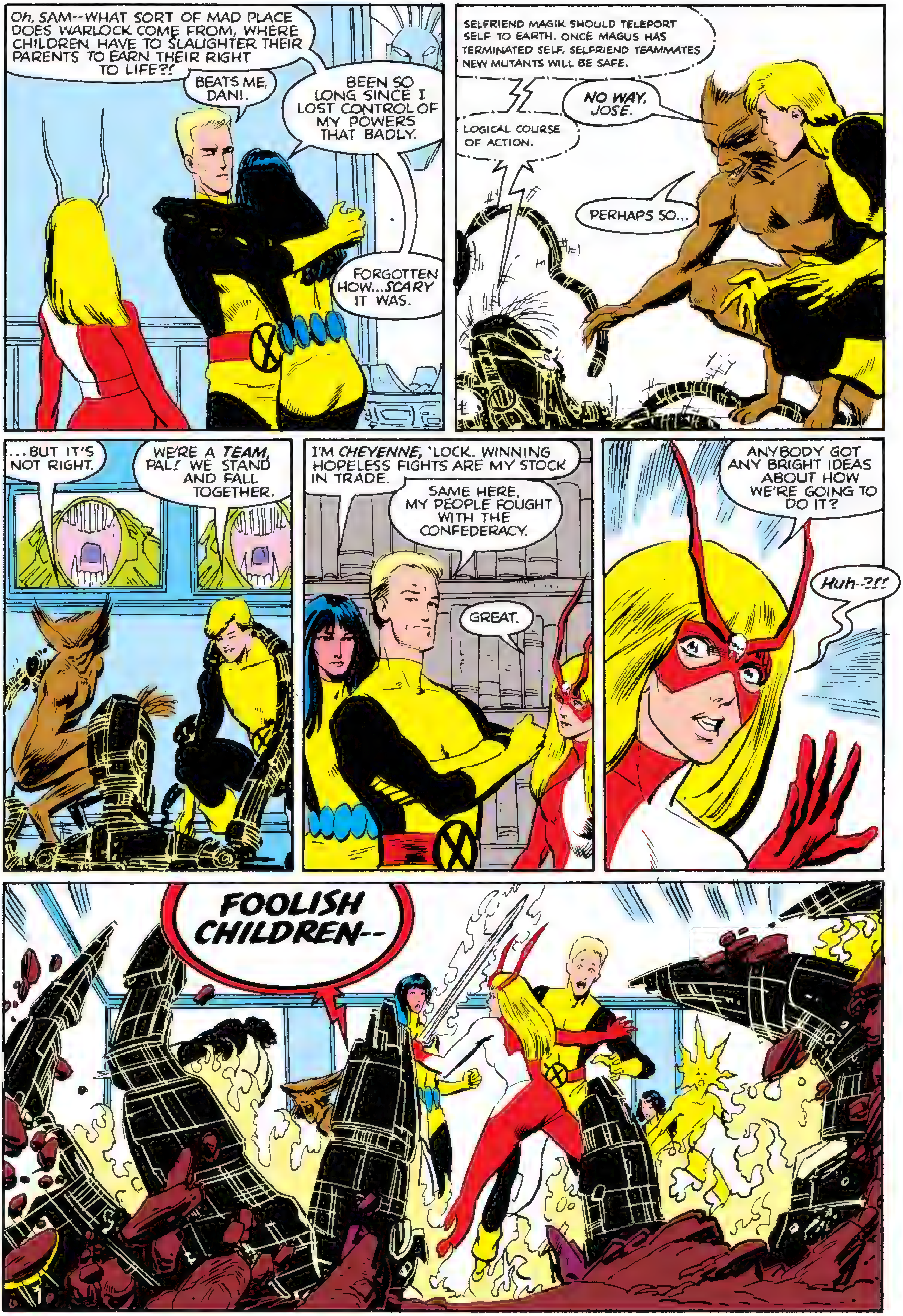

PERHAPS THE *OTHERS* CAN HELP--?!
*BUT THOUGH ROBERTO DaCOSTA CALLS AND CAJOLES AND SCREAMS AND SHAKES THEM AS HARD AS HE CAN...*
*...HIS TEAMMATES DO NOT WAKE.*
I'M ALL ALONE.
WHAT DO I DO NOW?!
MAGIK'S A DEMON SORCERESS. SHE'S PROBABLY BETTER OFF WITH HER OWN KIND.
BUT SUPPOSE THEY MEAN HER HARM?!
SHE'S *EVIL*. SERVES HER RIGHT.
SHE'S ALSO A NEW MUTANT.
DOESN'T THAT COUNT FOR ANYTHING?!
HOW OFTEN HAS SHE RISKED HER LIFE FOR US?! FOR ME?!!
WHY COULDN'T YOU BE *NICE*, ILLYANA?!
IT WOULD MAKE THIS DECISION *SO* MUCH EASIER.
SUPPOSE I CATCH THE DEMONS, WHAT THEN?!
WORRY ABOUT IT WHEN THE TIME COMES.
I'M BRILLIANT.
I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING--
AAGH!

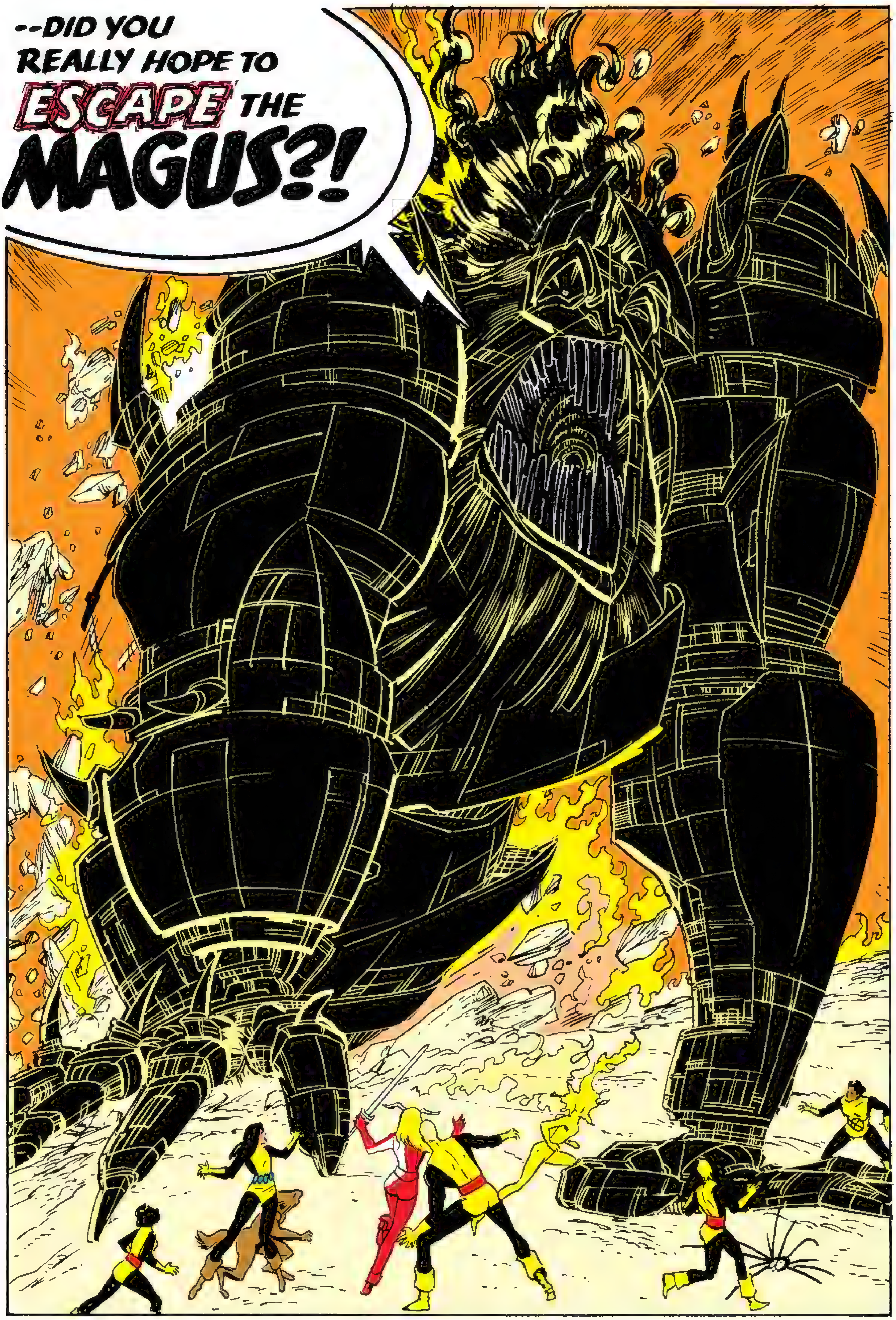

Much later...
TIME HAS COME.
SOME SORT OF TEMPLE--AND THEY'VE PLACED ILLYANA ON THE ALTAR AS A *SACRIFICE!*
MOMENT OF TRUTH, HOTSHOT.
WHAT'S THE PLAN?
...
OKAY, THEN--WHAT WOULD MY HERO, *THOMAS MAGNUM,* DO?!!
IMPROVISE SPECTACULARLY.
WISH I HAD MY *TIGERS* BASEBALL HAT.
THIS TWIG I'M CARRYING WON'T DO ANY DAMAGE...
...BUT IF I CAN GET AHOLD OF THAT SWORD--?!
*YO, BOBBYBABY, WHERE'S YOUR MANNERS?!*
*S'YM!*
ILLYANA'S *CHIEF DEMON!*
*DIDN'T ANYONE EVER TEACH YOU IT ISN'T POLITE...*
*...TO DISRUPT A CHURCH SERVICE?*

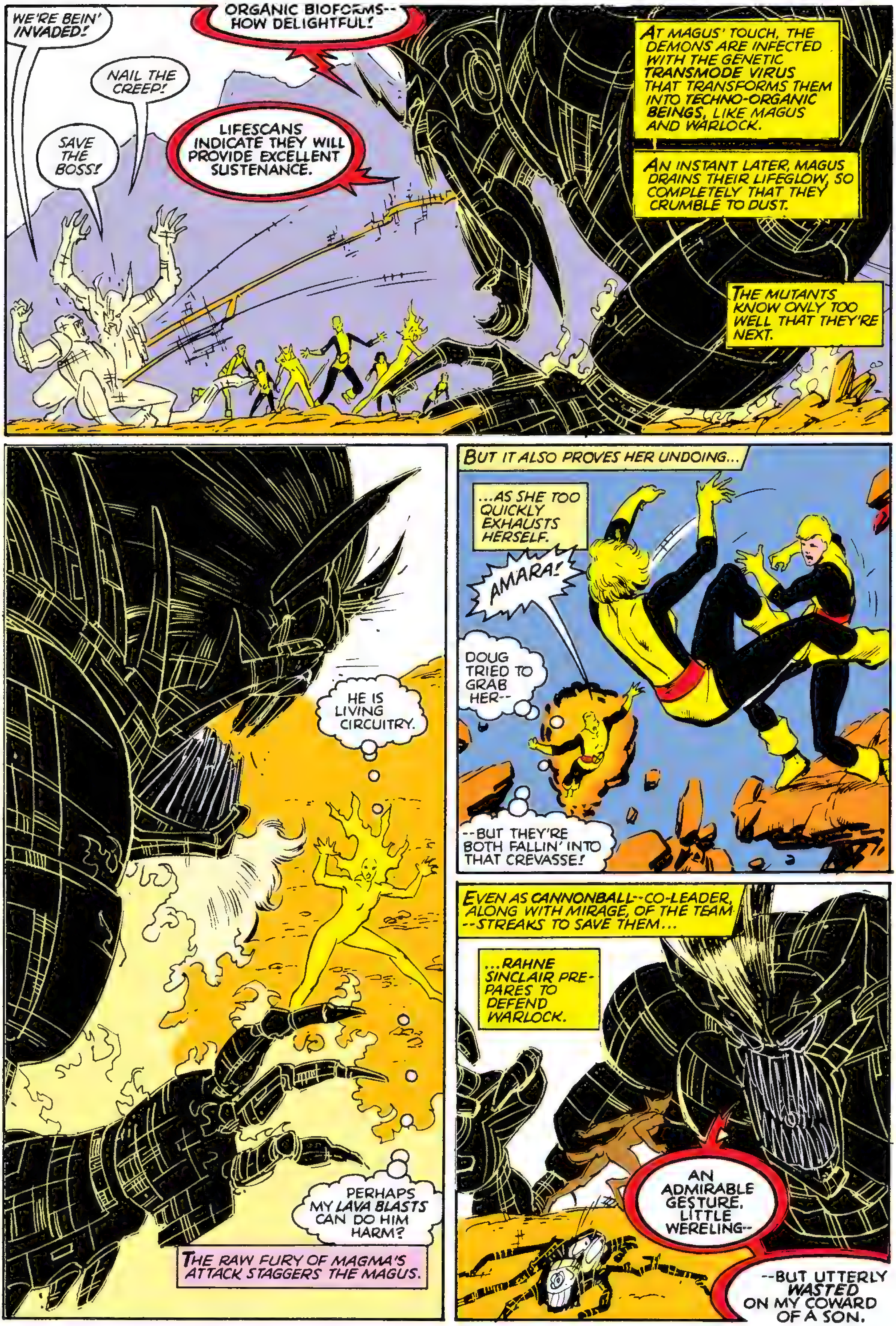

ILLYANA--?!!?
BUT--YOU WERE STABBED--THROUGH THE *HEART?!?*
*MAGICKAL REALM, MAGICKAL SWORD, MAGICKAL SPELL...*
...MAGICKAL *RESTORATION.*
BOYS DID GOOD, S'YM. I'M PROUD OF 'EM.
WHAT'S BOBBY DOING HERE?
"MUSTA FIGURED YOU WERE IN TROUBLE," IS S'YM'S AMUSED REPLY. "COME TO THE RESCUE."
SHE'S MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER. WHY DOES THAT MAKE HER...
REALLY?
THAT'S SWEET, BOBBY. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU CARED.
...EVEN MORE TERRIFYING?!
IT WAS NOTHING.
I'D HAVE DONE THE SAME...
...FOR *ANY* NEW MUTANT.
WHAT MATTERS, CHUM...
...IS THAT YOU DID IT FOR *ME.*
*AND, AFTER A CONSIDERABLY LESS ARDUOUS TREK BACK TO THE OTHERS...*
*...FOLLOWED BY THE CASTING OF A SPELL TO REVIVE THEM...*
GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL OKAY.
WISH YOU WERE VISITING UNDER PLEASANTER CIRCUMSTANCES.
I WISH WE HAD A PLEASANTER PLACE TO VISIT.

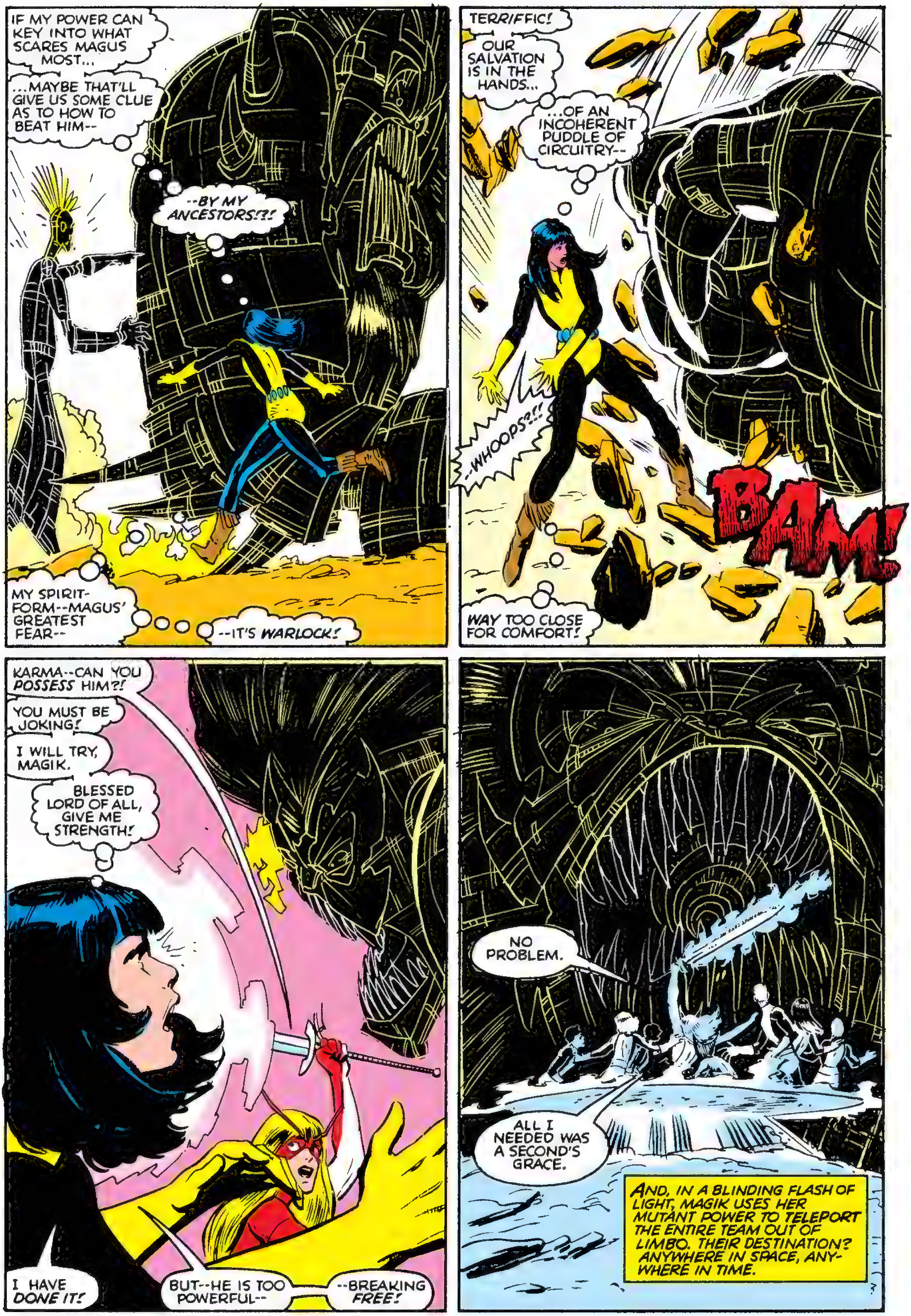

POINT TAKEN, BOBBY.
I GREW UP IN LIMBO--SPENT HALF MY LIFE HERE, LEARNING MY SORCEROUS CRAFT-- SO THIS MESS SEEMS NICE AND NORMAL TO ME.
HOW 'BOUT I CONJURE A FACSIMILE OF *PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL*, WILL THAT MAKE YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE?
NO.
DRAT!
NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, EVERY SPELL I CAST LATELY HAS A DAEMONIC TWIST TO IT.
SHOULD I TAKE ANOTHER SHOT, MIRAGE?
LET THIS RIDE, ILLYANA.
*WOLFSBANE'S* SPOOKED ENOUGH AS IT IS.
'FRAID WE ALL ARE.
PLACE'S PRETTY CHILL, ILLYANA, ANY CHANCE OF A FIRE?
ALLOW ME, CANNONBALL.
AS *MAGMA*, I CAN PROVIDE BOTH HEAT AND LIGHT.
BUT REGRETTABLY, NOT FOR LONG.
I DRAW MY POWER FROM THE *EARTH*. UNTIL WE RETURN THERE FROM LIMBO, I HAVE ONLY THE RESERVE STORED IN MY BODY.

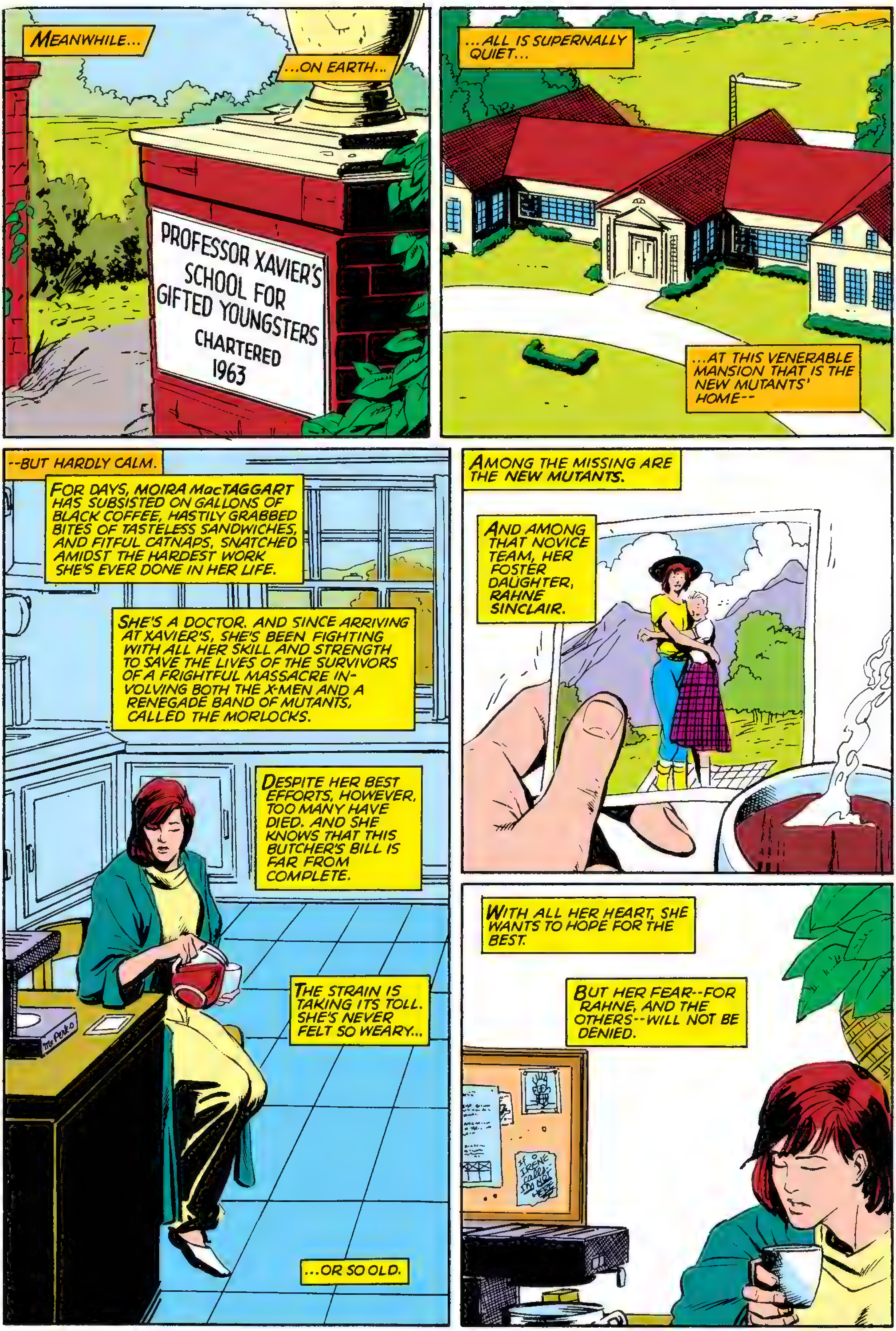

THERE'S ALSO FOOD AND DRINK...
...IF ANYONE'S INTER-ESTED.
I'LL... WAIT, THANKS...
...TILL WE'RE HOME.
YOU'RE GOING TO PROTECT US FROM THE *MAGUS?!*
FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD, ILLYANA, HE TEARS *STARS* IN HALF!
IS IT SAFE THERE, ROBERT?
ARE WE SAFE HERE??
SURE.
HE'S AFTER *WARLOCK'S* HIDE-- AND YOU CAN BET HE WON'T QUIT UNTIL HE GETS IT.
OR WE GET HIM FIRST.
IMPOSSIBLE, SELFSOULFRIEND-*CYPHER.*
CANNOT BE DONE. SELF IS DOOMED.
THE *HECK* YOU ARE!
CHEER UP, 'LOCK --
AAIEYAIEIE!
MAGUS!
NULL TERMI-NATION THOUGHT-END LIFE-END CHAOS FLEE TERROR hide
DANI--WHY'D YOU *SCREAM?!*
WARLOCK, *NO!* HELP ME, GUYS --HE'S *DISCORPOR-ATING!*
MY SKULL--
--FEELS LIKE... BEEN WHACKED BY AN IRON BAR!
'LOCK'S FEAR--SO GREAT, HIT ME SO HARD, BYPASSED MY PSYCHIC SHIELDS, TRIGGERED SPECIAL INTERFACE BETWEEN MY CONSCIOUSNESS AND HIS.
AGAINST MY WILL, MY "MIRAGE" POWER MANIFESTED A *SPIRIT-FORM* OF WHAT HE'S MOST AFRAID OF.
HIS *FATHER.*]

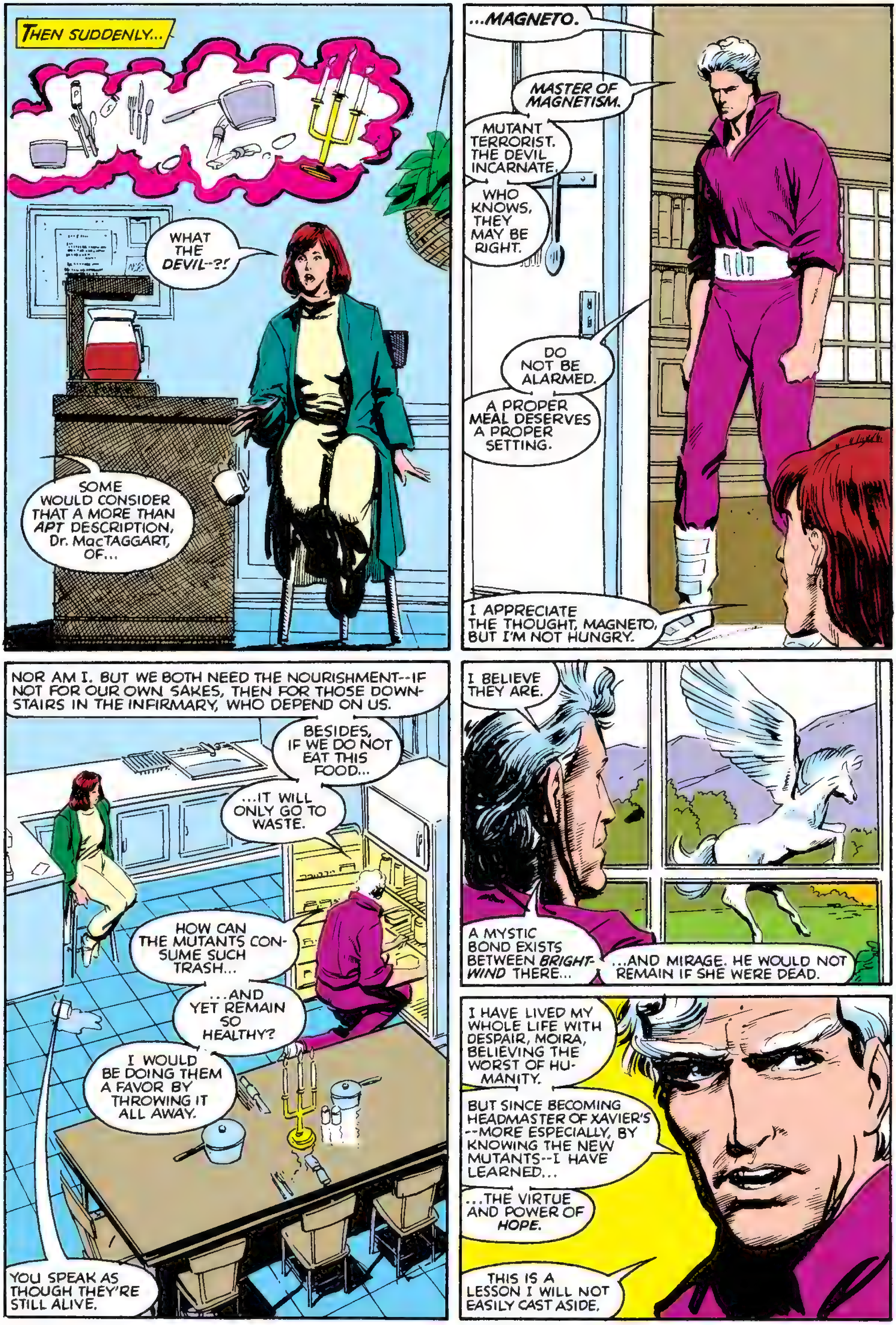

Oh, SAM--WHAT SORT OF MAD PLACE DOES WARLOCK COME FROM, WHERE CHILDREN HAVE TO SLAUGHTER THEIR PARENTS TO EARN THEIR RIGHT TO LIFE?!
BEATS ME, DANI.
BEEN SO LONG SINCE I LOST CONTROL OF MY POWERS THAT BADLY.
FORGOTTEN HOW...SCARY IT WAS.
SELFRIEND MAGIK SHOULD TELEPORT SELF TO EARTH. ONCE MAGUS HAS TERMINATED SELF, SELFRIEND TEAMMATES NEW MUTANTS WILL BE SAFE.
NO WAY, JOSE.
LOGICAL COURSE OF ACTION.
PERHAPS SO...
...BUT IT'S NOT RIGHT.
WE'RE A TEAM, PAL! WE STAND AND FALL TOGETHER.
I'M CHEYENNE, 'LOCK. WINNING HOPELESS FIGHTS ARE MY STOCK IN TRADE.
SAME HERE. MY PEOPLE FOUGHT WITH THE CONFEDERACY.
GREAT.
ANYBODY GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT HOW WE'RE GOING TO DO IT?
Huh--?!!
FOOLISH CHILDREN--

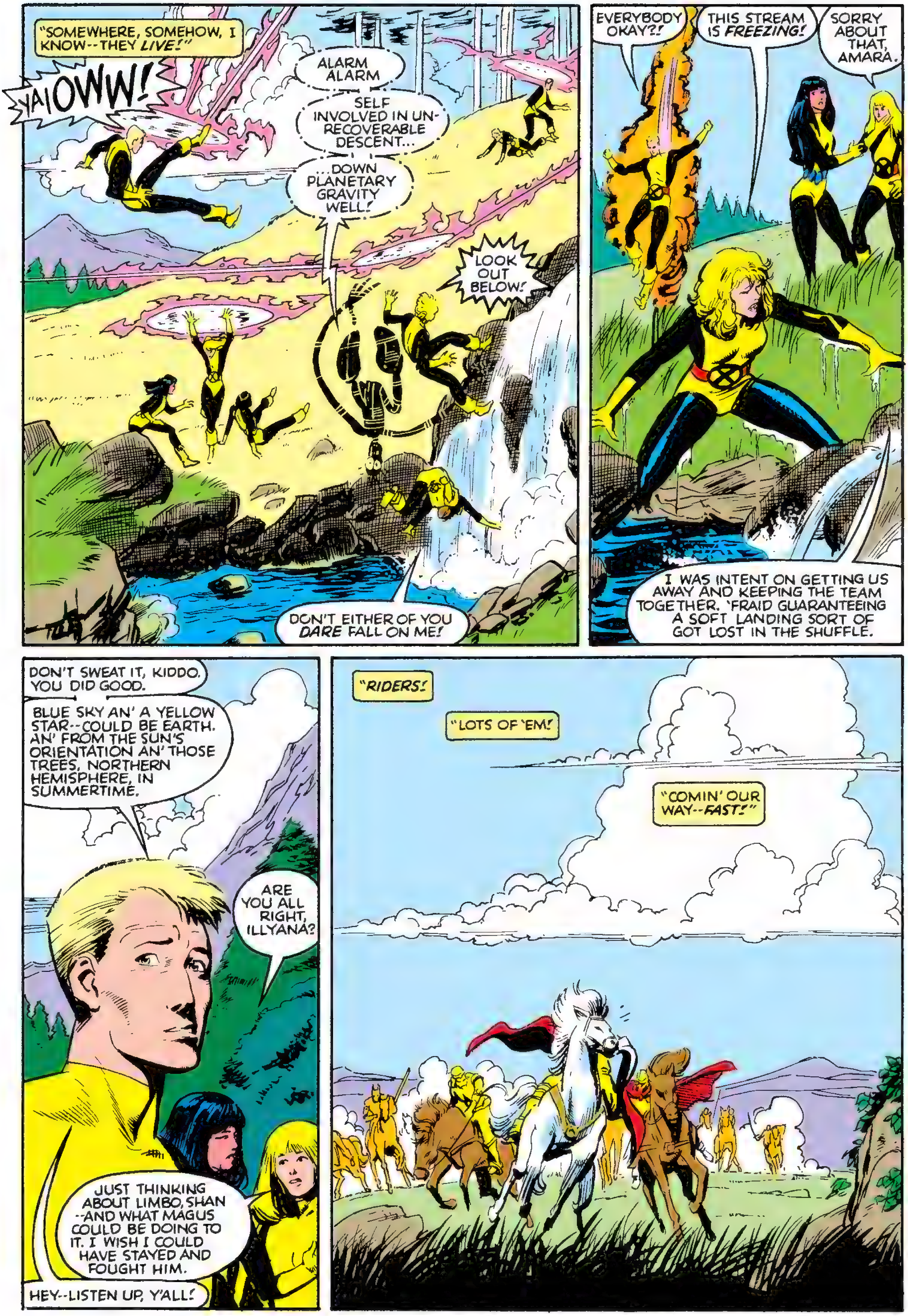

--DID YOU REALLY HOPE TO ESCAPE THE MAGUS?!

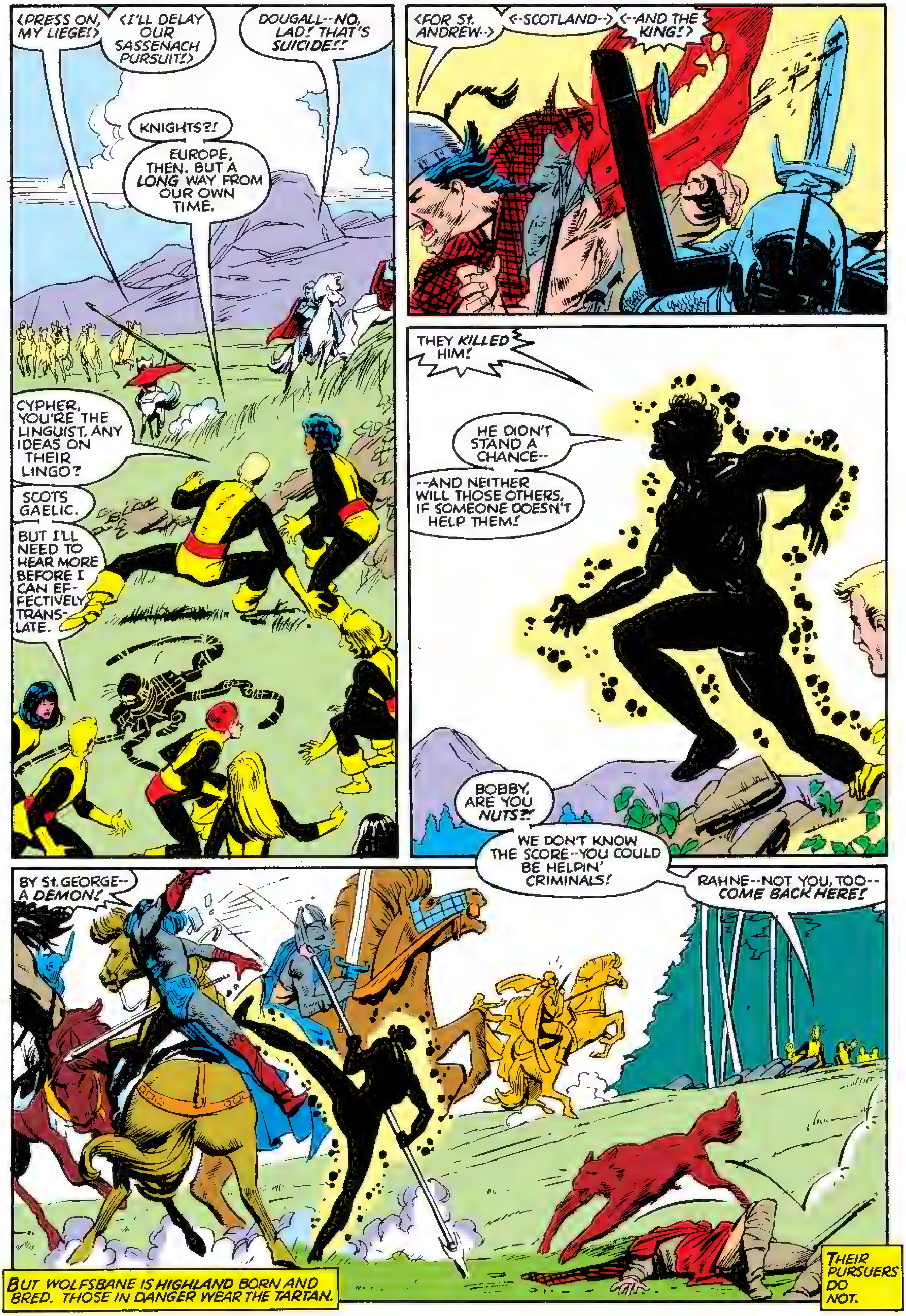

WE'RE BEIN' INVADED!
ORGANIC BIOFORMS-- HOW DELIGHTFUL!
NAIL THE CREEP!
SAVE THE BOSS!
LIFESCANS INDICATE THEY WILL PROVIDE EXCELLENT SUSTENANCE.
AT MAGUS' TOUCH, THE DEMONS ARE INFECTED WITH THE GENETIC TRANSMODE VIRUS THAT TRANSFORMS THEM INTO TECHNO-ORGANIC BEINGS, LIKE MAGUS AND WARLOCK.
AN INSTANT LATER, MAGUS DRAINS THEIR LIFEGLOW, SO COMPLETELY THAT THEY CRUMBLE TO DUST.
THE MUTANTS KNOW ONLY TOO WELL THAT THEY'RE NEXT.
HE IS LIVING CIRCUITRY.
PERHAPS MY LAVA BLASTS CAN DO HIM HARM?
THE RAW FURY OF MAGMA'S ATTACK STAGGERS THE MAGUS.
BUT IT ALSO PROVES HER UNDOING...
...AS SHE TOO QUICKLY EXHAUSTS HERSELF.
AMARA!
DOUG TRIED TO GRAB HER--
--BUT THEY'RE BOTH FALLIN' INTO THAT CREVASSE!
EVEN AS CANNONBALL--CO-LEADER, ALONG WITH MIRAGE, OF THE TEAM --STREAKS TO SAVE THEM...
...RAHNE SINCLAIR PREPARES TO DEFEND WARLOCK.
AN ADMIRABLE GESTURE, LITTLE WERELING--
--BUT UTTERLY WASTED ON MY COWARD OF A SON.


IF MY POWER CAN KEY INTO WHAT SCARES MAGUS MOST...
...MAYBE THAT'LL GIVE US SOME CLUE AS TO HOW TO BEAT HIM--
--BY MY ANCESTORS?!?
MY SPIRIT-FORM--MAGUS' GREATEST FEAR--
--IT'S *WARLOCK!*
TERR*I*FFIC!
OUR SALVATION IS IN THE HANDS...
...OF AN INCOHERENT PUDDLE OF CIRCUITRY--
--WHOOPS?!!
BAM!
*WAY* TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!
KARMA--CAN YOU *POSSESS* HIM?!
YOU MUST BE JOKING!
I WILL TRY, MAGIK.
BLESSED LORD OF ALL, GIVE ME STRENGTH!
I HAVE *DONE IT!*
BUT--HE IS TOO POWERFUL--
--BREAKING *FREE!*
NO PROBLEM.
ALL I NEEDED WAS A SECOND'S GRACE.
*AND, IN A BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT, MAGIK USES HER MUTANT POWER TO TELEPORT THE ENTIRE TEAM OUT OF LIMBO. THEIR DESTINATION? ANYWHERE IN SPACE, ANYWHERE IN TIME.*

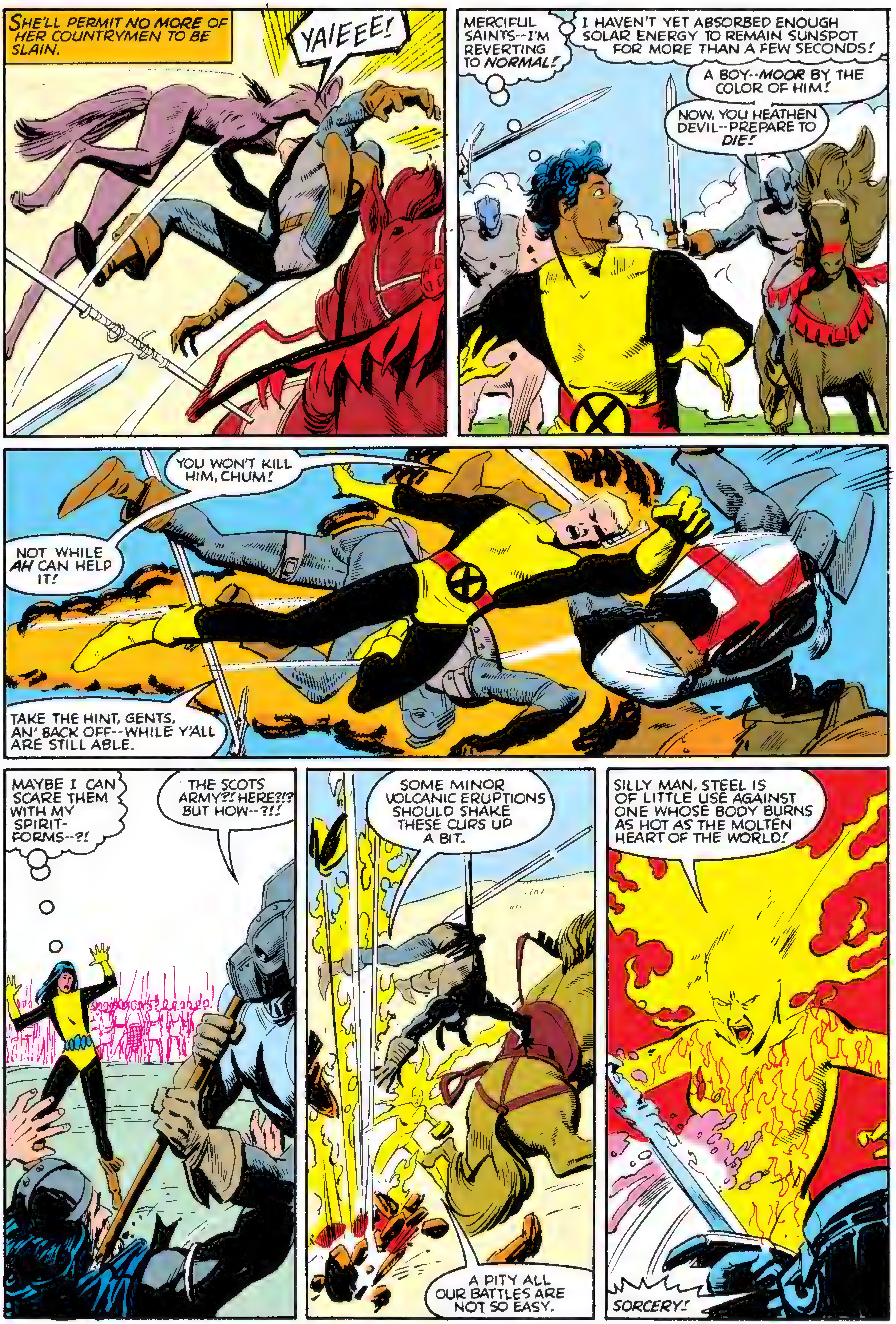

MEANWHILE...
...ON EARTH...
PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS CHARTERED 1963
...ALL IS SUPERNALLY QUIET...
...AT THIS VENERABLE MANSION THAT IS THE NEW MUTANTS' HOME--
--BUT HARDLY CALM.
FOR DAYS, MOIRA MacTAGGART HAS SUBSISTED ON GALLONS OF BLACK COFFEE, HASTILY GRABBED BITES OF TASTELESS SANDWICHES, AND FITFUL CATNAPS, SNATCHED AMIDST THE HARDEST WORK SHE'S EVER DONE IN HER LIFE.
SHE'S A DOCTOR. AND SINCE ARRIVING AT XAVIER'S, SHE'S BEEN FIGHTING WITH ALL HER SKILL AND STRENGTH TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE SURVIVORS OF A FRIGHTFUL MASSACRE INVOLVING BOTH THE X-MEN AND A RENEGADE BAND OF MUTANTS, CALLED THE MORLOCKS.
DESPITE HER BEST EFFORTS, HOWEVER, TOO MANY HAVE DIED. AND SHE KNOWS THAT THIS BUTCHER'S BILL IS FAR FROM COMPLETE.
THE STRAIN IS TAKING ITS TOLL. SHE'S NEVER FELT SO WEARY...
...OR SO OLD.
AMONG THE MISSING ARE THE NEW MUTANTS.
AND AMONG THAT NOVICE TEAM, HER FOSTER DAUGHTER, RAHNE SINCLAIR.
WITH ALL HER HEART, SHE WANTS TO HOPE FOR THE BEST.
BUT HER FEAR--FOR RAHNE, AND THE OTHERS--WILL NOT BE DENIED.
IF IRENE calls I'm NOT

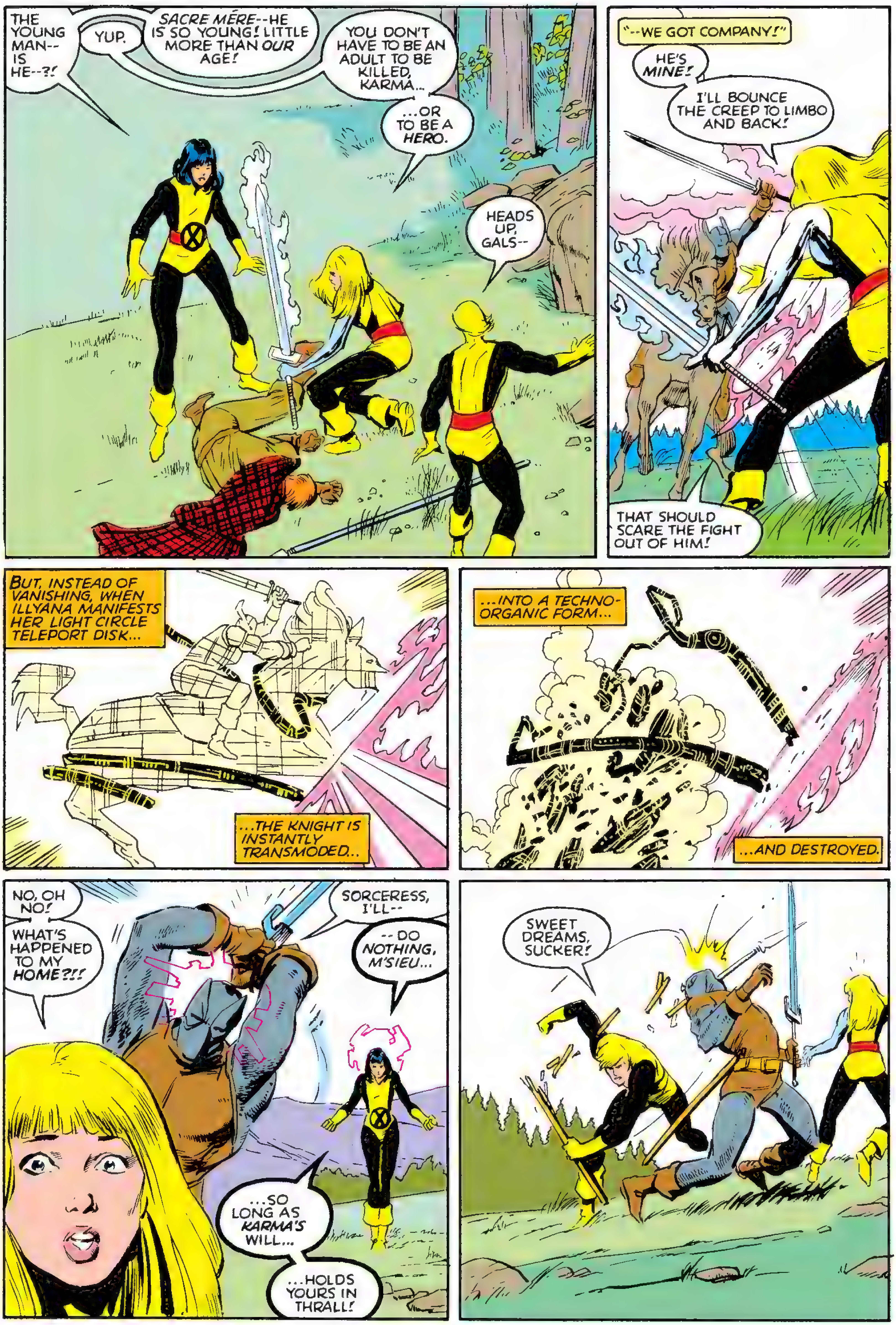

THEN SUDDENLY...
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!
SOME WOULD CONSIDER THAT A MORE THAN APT DESCRIPTION, Dr. MacTAGGART, OF...
...MAGNETO.
MASTER OF MAGNETISM.
MUTANT TERRORIST. THE DEVIL INCARNATE.
WHO KNOWS, THEY MAY BE RIGHT.
DO NOT BE ALARMED.
A PROPER MEAL DESERVES A PROPER SETTING.
I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, MAGNETO, BUT I'M NOT HUNGRY.
NOR AM I. BUT WE BOTH NEED THE NOURISHMENT--IF NOT FOR OUR OWN SAKES, THEN FOR THOSE DOWNSTAIRS IN THE INFIRMARY, WHO DEPEND ON US.
BESIDES, IF WE DO NOT EAT THIS FOOD...
...IT WILL ONLY GO TO WASTE.
HOW CAN THE MUTANTS CONSUME SUCH TRASH...
...AND YET REMAIN SO HEALTHY?
I WOULD BE DOING THEM A FAVOR BY THROWING IT ALL AWAY.
YOU SPEAK AS THOUGH THEY'RE STILL ALIVE.
I BELIEVE THEY ARE.
A MYSTIC BOND EXISTS BETWEEN BRIGHTWIND THERE...
...AND MIRAGE. HE WOULD NOT REMAIN IF SHE WERE DEAD.
I HAVE LIVED MY WHOLE LIFE WITH DESPAIR, MOIRA, BELIEVING THE WORST OF HUMANITY.
BUT SINCE BECOMING HEADMASTER OF XAVIER'S --MORE ESPECIALLY, BY KNOWING THE NEW MUTANTS--I HAVE LEARNED...
...THE VIRTUE AND POWER OF HOPE.
THIS IS A LESSON I WILL NOT EASILY CAST ASIDE.

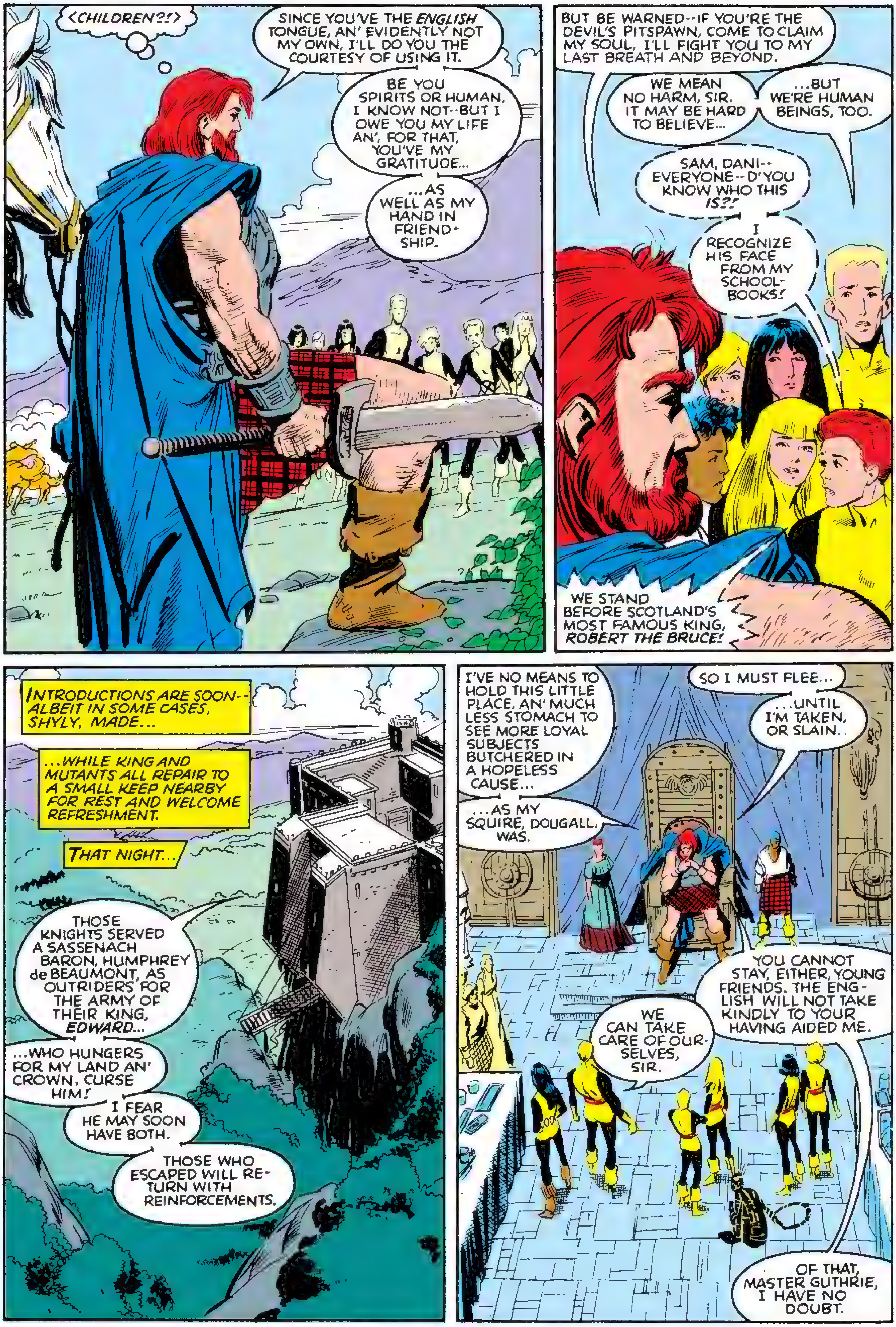

"SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW, I KNOW--THEY *LIVE!*"
YAIOWW!
ALARM ALARM
SELF INVOLVED IN UN-RECOVERABLE DESCENT...
...DOWN PLANETARY GRAVITY WELL!
LOOK OUT BELOW!
DON'T EITHER OF YOU *DARE* FALL ON ME!
EVERYBODY OKAY?!
THIS STREAM IS *FREEZING!*
SORRY ABOUT THAT, AMARA.
I WAS INTENT ON GETTING US AWAY AND KEEPING THE TEAM TOGETHER. 'FRAID GUARANTEEING A SOFT LANDING SORT OF GOT LOST IN THE SHUFFLE.
DON'T SWEAT IT, KIDDO. YOU DID GOOD.
BLUE SKY AN' A YELLOW STAR--COULD BE EARTH. AN' FROM THE SUN'S ORIENTATION AN' THOSE TREES, NORTHERN HEMISPHERE, IN SUMMERTIME.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, ILLYANA?
JUST THINKING ABOUT LIMBO, SHAN --AND WHAT MAGUS COULD BE DOING TO IT. I WISH I COULD HAVE STAYED AND FOUGHT HIM.
HEY--LISTEN UP, Y'ALL!
"*RIDERS!*
"LOTS OF 'EM!
"COMIN' OUR WAY--*FAST!*"

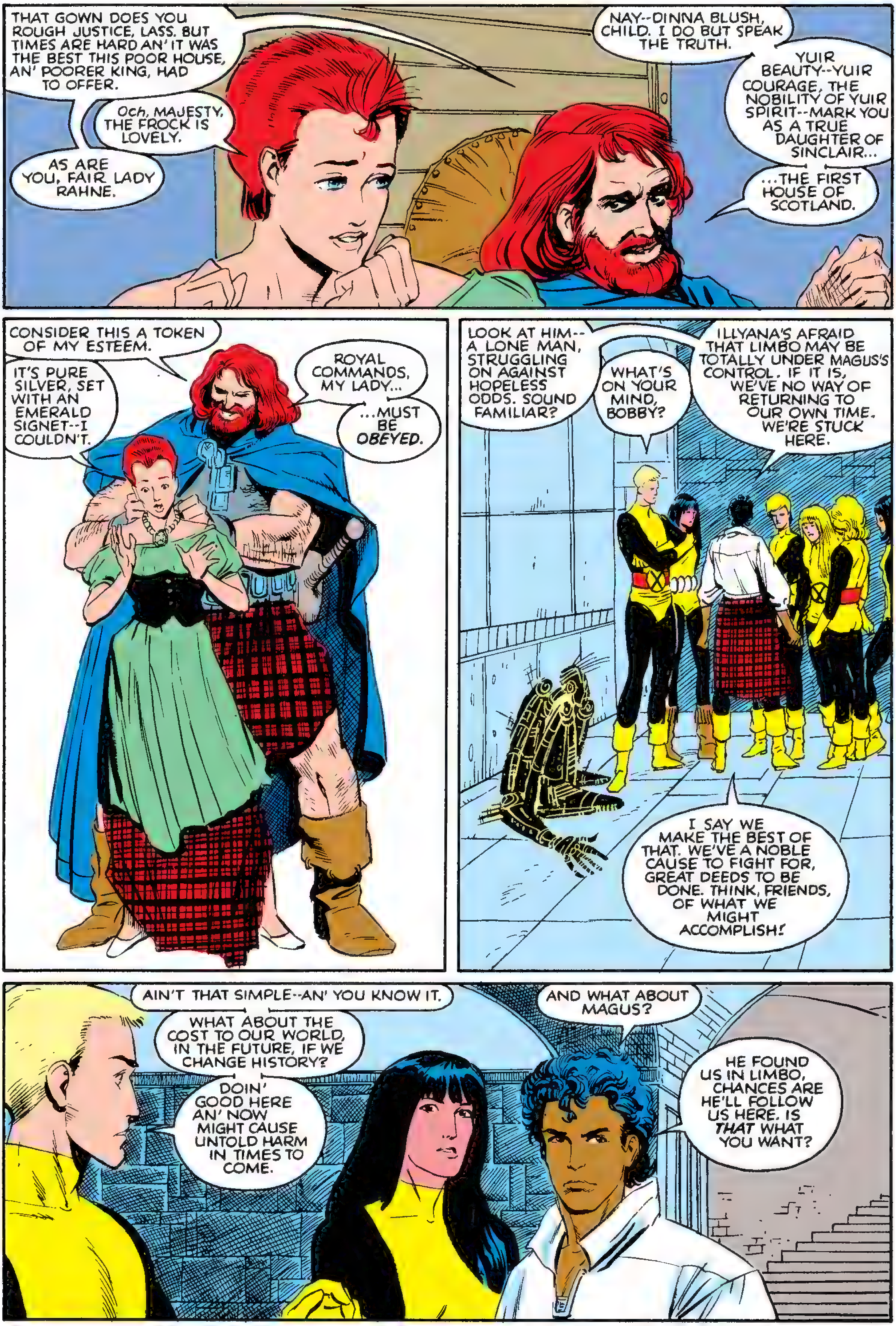


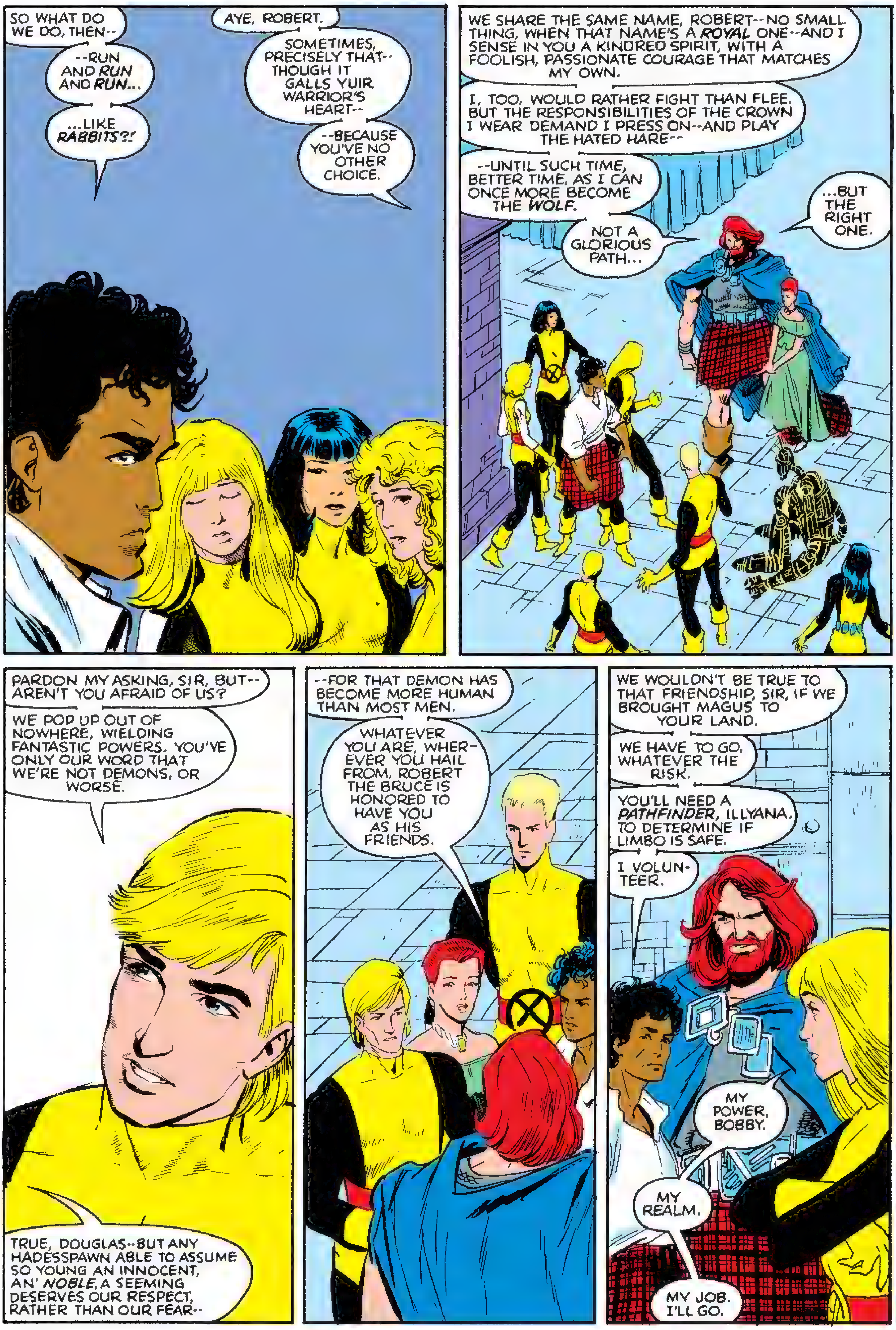
‹PRESS ON, MY LIEGE!›
‹I'LL DELAY OUR SASSENACH PURSUIT!›
DOUGALL--NO, LAD! THAT'S SUICIDE!!
KNIGHTS?!
EUROPE, THEN. BUT A LONG WAY FROM OUR OWN TIME.
CYPHER, YOU'RE THE LINGUIST. ANY IDEAS ON THEIR LINGO?
SCOTS GAELIC.
BUT I'LL NEED TO HEAR MORE BEFORE I CAN EFFECTIVELY TRANSLATE.
‹FOR St. ANDREW--›
‹--SCOTLAND--›
‹--AND THE KING!›
THEY KILLED HIM!
HE DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE--
--AND NEITHER WILL THOSE OTHERS, IF SOMEONE DOESN'T HELP THEM!
BOBBY, ARE YOU NUTS?!
WE DON'T KNOW THE SCORE--YOU COULD BE HELPIN' CRIMINALS!
BY St. GEORGE--A DEMON!
RAHNE--NOT YOU, TOO--COME BACK HERE!
BUT WOLFSBANE IS HIGHLAND BORN AND BRED. THOSE IN DANGER WEAR THE TARTAN.
THEIR PURSUERS DO NOT.

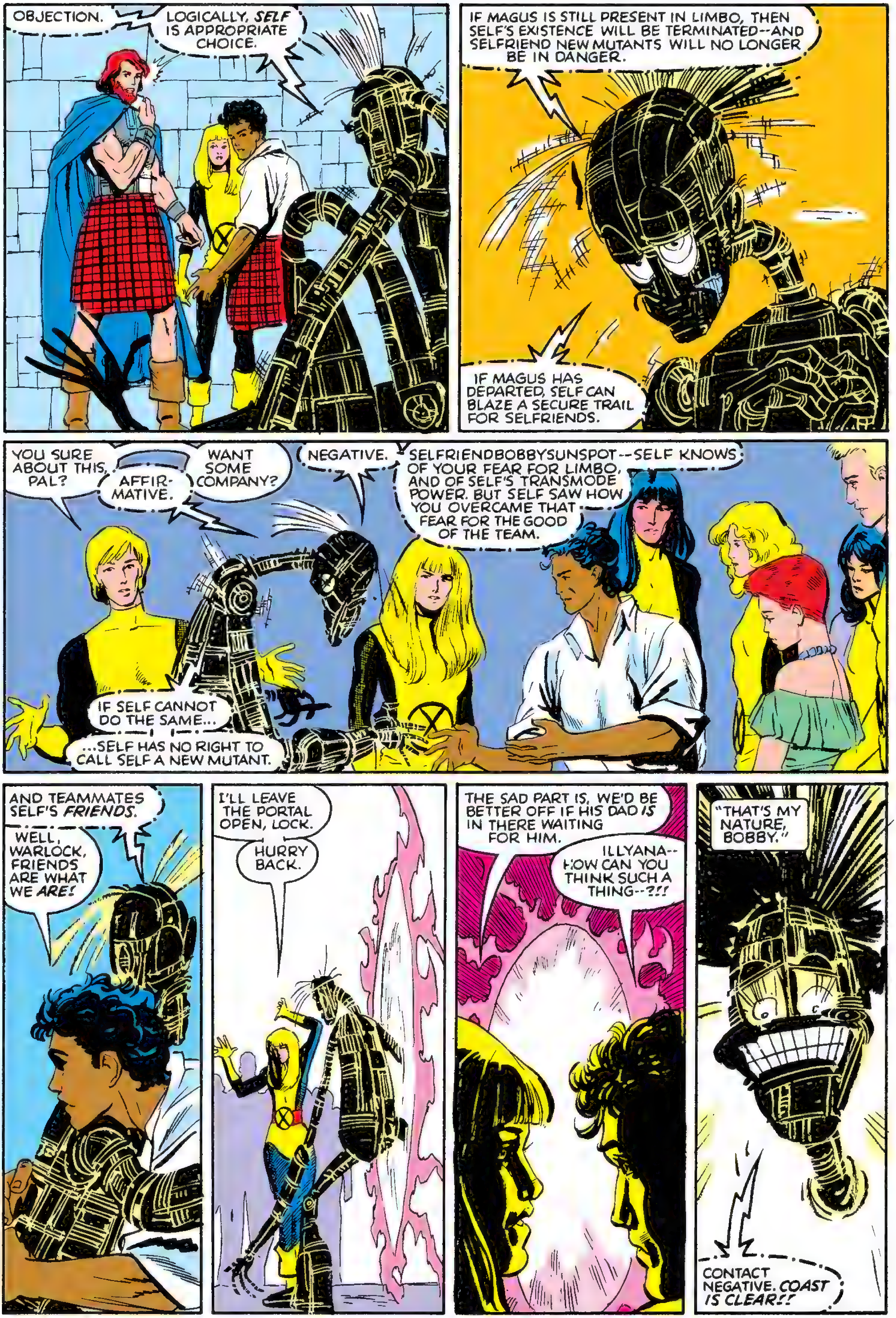

SHE'LL PERMIT NO MORE OF HER COUNTRYMEN TO BE SLAIN.
YAIEEE!
MERCIFUL SAINTS--I'M REVERTING TO *NORMAL!*
I HAVEN'T YET ABSORBED ENOUGH SOLAR ENERGY TO REMAIN SUNSPOT FOR MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS!
A BOY--*MOOR* BY THE COLOR OF HIM!
NOW, YOU HEATHEN DEVIL--PREPARE TO *DIE!*
YOU WON'T KILL HIM, CHUM!
NOT WHILE *AH* CAN HELP IT!
TAKE THE HINT, GENTS, AN' BACK OFF--WHILE Y'ALL ARE STILL ABLE.
MAYBE I CAN SCARE THEM WITH MY SPIRIT-FORMS--?!
THE SCOTS ARMY?! HERE?!? BUT HOW--?!!
SOME MINOR VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS SHOULD SHAKE THESE CURS UP A BIT.
A PITY ALL OUR BATTLES ARE NOT SO EASY.
SILLY MAN, STEEL IS OF LITTLE USE AGAINST ONE WHOSE BODY BURNS AS HOT AS THE MOLTEN HEART OF THE WORLD!
SORCERY!

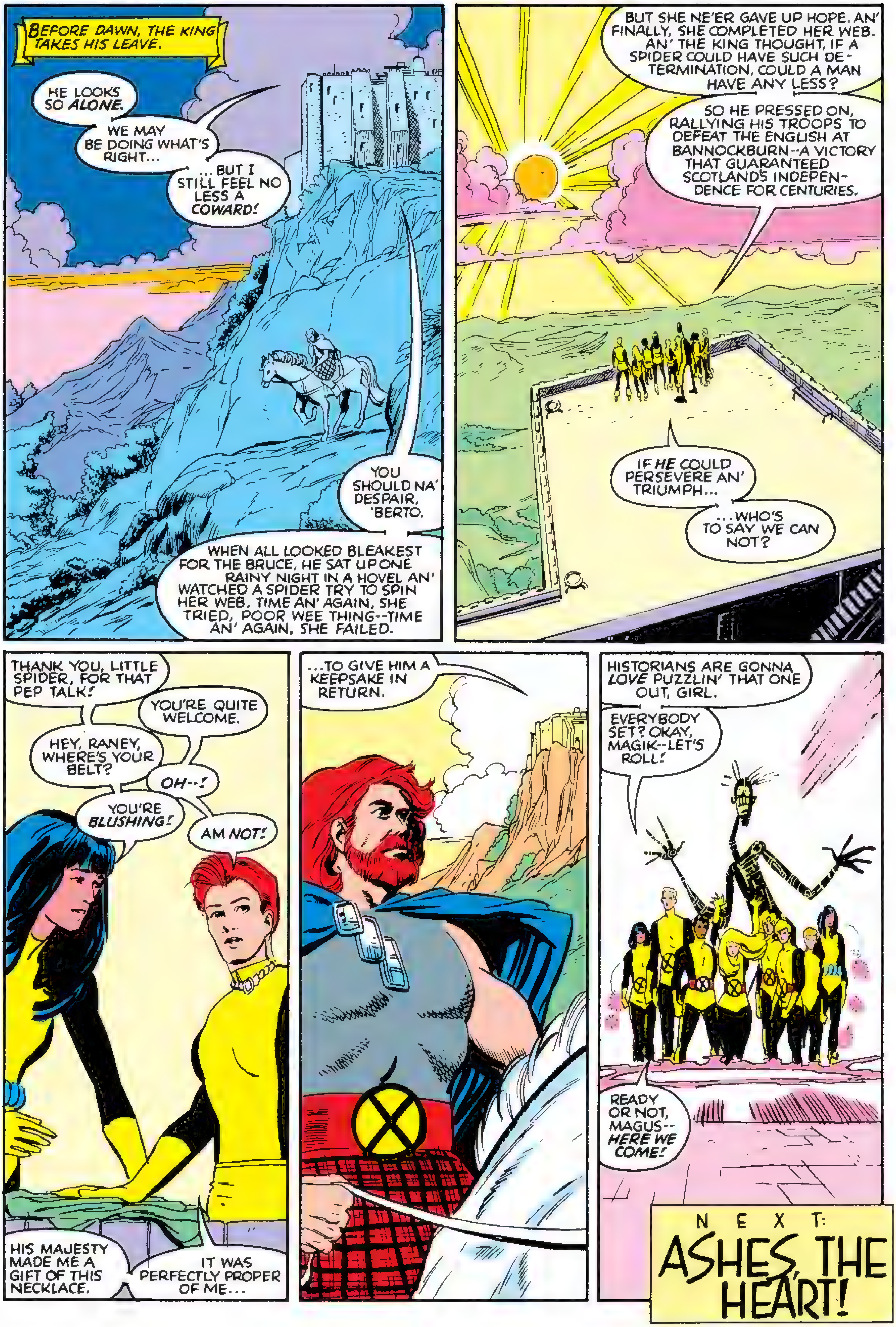

THE YOUNG MAN-- IS HE--?!
YUP.
SACRE MÉRE--HE IS SO YOUNG! LITTLE MORE THAN OUR AGE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN ADULT TO BE KILLED, KARMA...
...OR TO BE A HERO.
HEADS UP, GALS--
"--WE GOT COMPANY!"
HE'S MINE!
I'LL BOUNCE THE CREEP TO LIMBO AND BACK!
THAT SHOULD SCARE THE FIGHT OUT OF HIM!
BUT, INSTEAD OF VANISHING, WHEN ILLYANA MANIFESTS HER LIGHT CIRCLE TELEPORT DISK...
...THE KNIGHT IS INSTANTLY TRANSMODED...
...INTO A TECHNO-ORGANIC FORM...
...AND DESTROYED.
NO, OH NO!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO MY HOME?!!
SORCERESS, I'LL--
--DO NOTHING, M'SIEU...
...SO LONG AS KARMA'S WILL...
...HOLDS YOURS IN THRALL!
SWEET DREAMS, SUCKER!


<CHILDREN?!>
SINCE YOU'VE THE *ENGLISH* TONGUE, AN' EVIDENTLY NOT MY OWN, I'LL DO YOU THE COURTESY OF USING IT.
BE YOU SPIRITS OR HUMAN, I KNOW NOT--BUT I OWE YOU MY LIFE AN', FOR THAT, YOU'VE MY GRATITUDE...
...AS WELL AS MY HAND IN FRIENDSHIP.
BUT BE WARNED--IF YOU'RE THE DEVIL'S PITSPAWN, COME TO CLAIM MY SOUL, I'LL FIGHT YOU TO MY LAST BREATH AND BEYOND.
WE MEAN NO HARM, SIR. IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE...
...BUT WE'RE HUMAN BEINGS, TOO.
SAM, DANI-- EVERYONE--D'YOU KNOW WHO THIS *IS?!*
I RECOGNIZE HIS FACE FROM MY SCHOOL-BOOKS!
WE STAND BEFORE SCOTLAND'S MOST FAMOUS KING, *ROBERT THE BRUCE!*
*INTRODUCTIONS ARE SOON-- ALBEIT IN SOME CASES, SHYLY, MADE...*
*...WHILE KING AND MUTANTS ALL REPAIR TO A SMALL KEEP NEARBY FOR REST AND WELCOME REFRESHMENT.*
*THAT NIGHT...*
THOSE KNIGHTS SERVED A SASSENACH BARON, HUMPHREY de BEAUMONT, AS OUTRIDERS FOR THE ARMY OF THEIR KING, *EDWARD...*
...WHO HUNGERS FOR MY LAND AN' CROWN, CURSE HIM!
I FEAR HE MAY SOON HAVE BOTH.
THOSE WHO ESCAPED WILL RETURN WITH REINFORCEMENTS.
I'VE NO MEANS TO HOLD THIS LITTLE PLACE, AN' MUCH LESS STOMACH TO SEE MORE LOYAL SUBJECTS BUTCHERED IN A HOPELESS CAUSE...
...AS MY SQUIRE, DOUGALL, WAS.
SO I MUST FLEE...
...UNTIL I'M TAKEN, OR SLAIN...
YOU CANNOT STAY, EITHER, YOUNG FRIENDS. THE ENGLISH WILL NOT TAKE KINDLY TO YOUR HAVING AIDED ME.
WE CAN TAKE CARE OF OUR-SELVES, SIR.
OF THAT, MASTER GUTHRIE, I HAVE NO DOUBT.

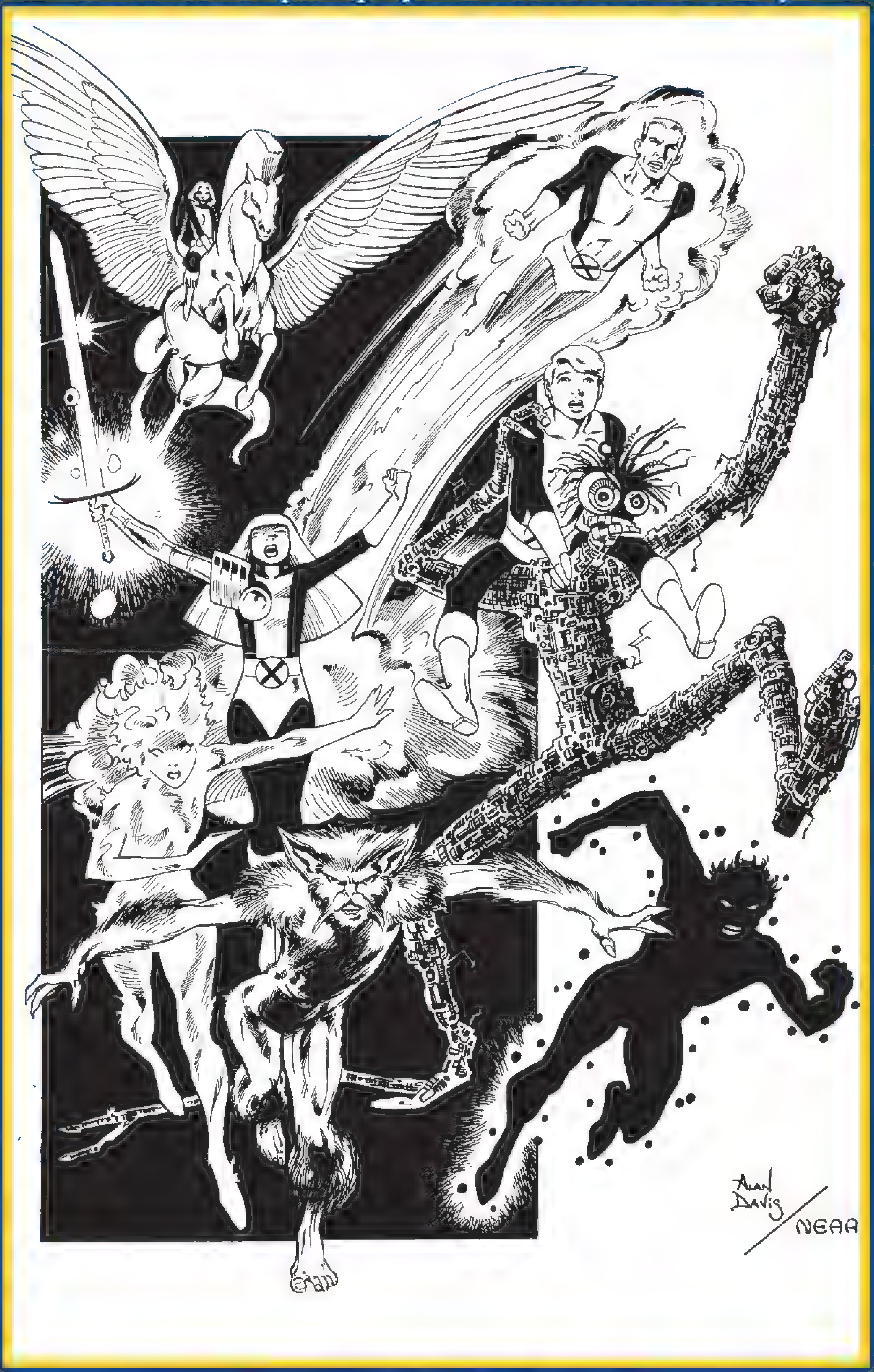

THAT GOWN DOES YOU ROUGH JUSTICE, LASS. BUT TIMES ARE HARD AN' IT WAS THE BEST THIS POOR HOUSE, AN' POORER KING, HAD TO OFFER.
*Och*, MAJESTY, THE FROCK IS LOVELY.
AS ARE YOU, FAIR LADY RAHNE.
NAY--DINNA BLUSH, CHILD. I DO BUT SPEAK THE TRUTH.
YUIR BEAUTY--YUIR COURAGE, THE NOBILITY OF YUIR SPIRIT--MARK YOU AS A TRUE DAUGHTER OF SINCLAIR...
...THE FIRST HOUSE OF SCOTLAND.
CONSIDER THIS A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM.
IT'S PURE SILVER, SET WITH AN EMERALD SIGNET--I COULDN'T.
ROYAL COMMANDS, MY LADY...
...MUST BE *OBEYED*.
LOOK AT HIM--A LONE MAN, STRUGGLING ON AGAINST HOPELESS ODDS. SOUND FAMILIAR?
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, BOBBY?
ILLYANA'S AFRAID THAT LIMBO MAY BE TOTALLY UNDER MAGUS'S CONTROL. IF IT IS, WE'VE NO WAY OF RETURNING TO OUR OWN TIME. WE'RE STUCK HERE.
I SAY WE MAKE THE BEST OF THAT. WE'VE A NOBLE CAUSE TO FIGHT FOR, GREAT DEEDS TO BE DONE. THINK, FRIENDS, OF WHAT WE MIGHT ACCOMPLISH!
AIN'T THAT SIMPLE--AN' YOU KNOW IT.
WHAT ABOUT THE COST TO OUR WORLD, IN THE FUTURE, IF WE CHANGE HISTORY?
DOIN' GOOD HERE AN' NOW MIGHT CAUSE UNTOLD HARM IN TIMES TO COME.
AND WHAT ABOUT MAGUS?
HE FOUND US IN LIMBO, CHANCES ARE HE'LL FOLLOW US HERE. IS *THAT* WHAT YOU WANT?


SO WHAT DO WE DO, THEN--
--RUN AND *RUN* AND *RUN*...
...LIKE *RABBITS*?!
AYE, ROBERT.
SOMETIMES, PRECISELY THAT--THOUGH IT GALLS YUIR WARRIOR'S HEART--
--BECAUSE YOU'VE NO OTHER CHOICE.
WE SHARE THE SAME NAME, ROBERT--NO SMALL THING, WHEN THAT NAME'S A *ROYAL* ONE--AND I SENSE IN YOU A KINDRED SPIRIT, WITH A FOOLISH, PASSIONATE COURAGE THAT MATCHES MY OWN.
I, TOO, WOULD RATHER FIGHT THAN FLEE. BUT THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CROWN I WEAR DEMAND I PRESS ON--AND PLAY THE HATED HARE--
--UNTIL SUCH TIME, BETTER TIME, AS I CAN ONCE MORE BECOME THE *WOLF*.
NOT A GLORIOUS PATH...
...BUT THE RIGHT ONE.
PARDON MY ASKING, SIR, BUT--AREN'T YOU AFRAID OF US?
WE POP UP OUT OF NOWHERE, WIELDING FANTASTIC POWERS. YOU'VE ONLY OUR WORD THAT WE'RE NOT DEMONS, OR WORSE.
TRUE, DOUGLAS--BUT ANY HADESSPAWN ABLE TO ASSUME SO YOUNG AN INNOCENT, AN' *NOBLE*, A SEEMING DESERVES OUR RESPECT, RATHER THAN OUR FEAR--
--FOR THAT DEMON HAS BECOME MORE HUMAN THAN MOST MEN.
WHATEVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER YOU HAIL FROM, ROBERT THE BRUCE IS HONORED TO HAVE YOU AS HIS FRIENDS.
WE WOULDN'T BE TRUE TO THAT FRIENDSHIP, SIR, IF WE BROUGHT MAGUS TO YOUR LAND.
WE HAVE TO GO, WHATEVER THE RISK.
YOU'LL NEED A *PATHFINDER*, ILLYANA, TO DETERMINE IF LIMBO IS SAFE.
I VOLUNTEER.
MY POWER, BOBBY.
MY REALM.
MY JOB. I'LL GO.

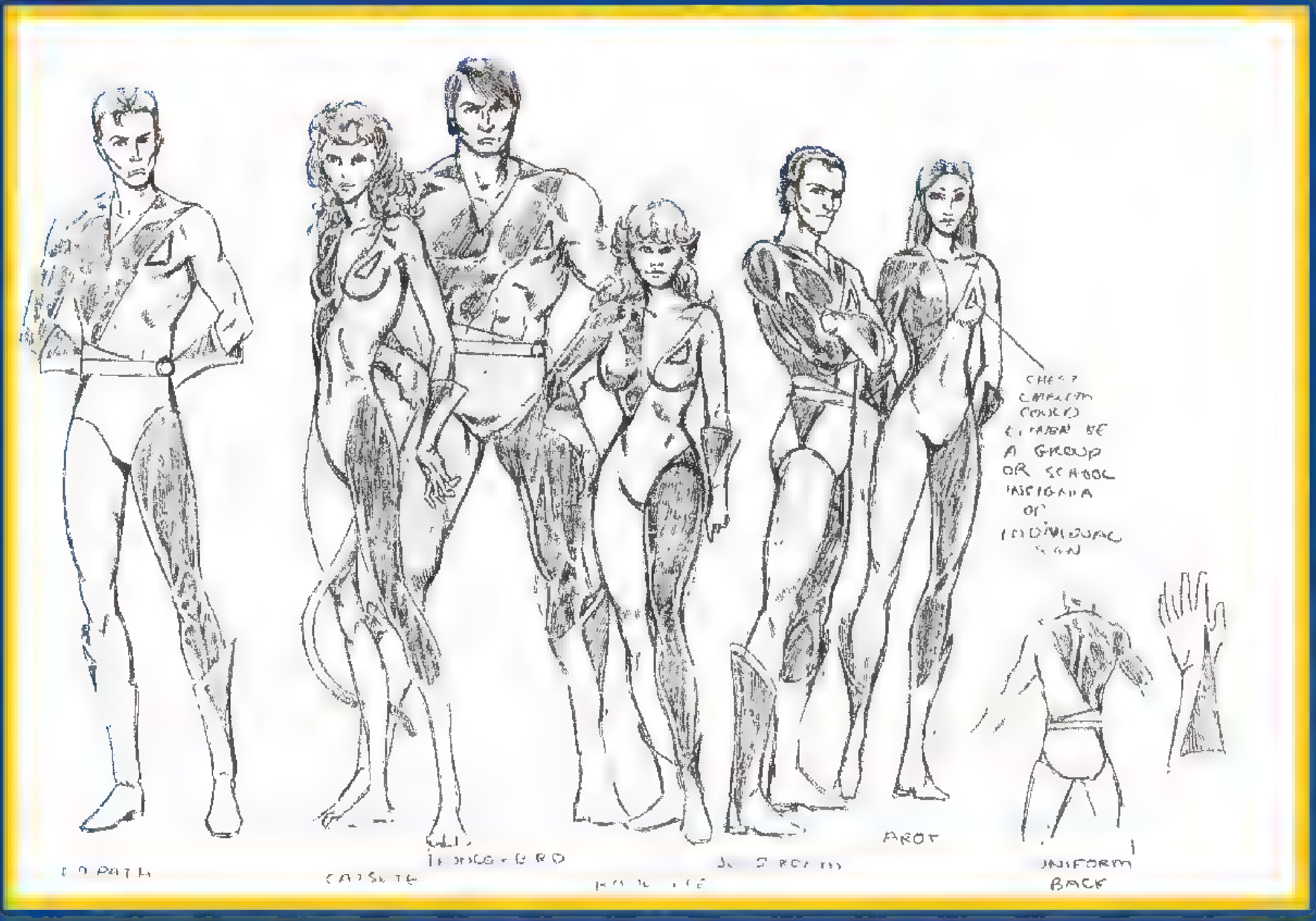

OBJECTION.
LOGICALLY, *SELF* IS APPROPRIATE CHOICE.
IF MAGUS IS STILL PRESENT IN LIMBO, THEN SELF'S EXISTENCE WILL BE TERMINATED--AND SELFRIEND NEW MUTANTS WILL NO LONGER BE IN DANGER.
IF MAGUS HAS DEPARTED, SELF CAN BLAZE A SECURE TRAIL FOR SELFRIENDS.
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, PAL?
AFFIRMATIVE.
WANT SOME COMPANY?
NEGATIVE.
SELFRIENDBOBBYSUNSPOT--SELF KNOWS OF YOUR FEAR FOR LIMBO, AND OF SELF'S TRANSMODE POWER. BUT SELF SAW HOW YOU OVERCAME THAT FEAR FOR THE GOOD OF THE TEAM.
IF SELF CANNOT DO THE SAME...
...SELF HAS NO RIGHT TO CALL SELF A NEW MUTANT.
AND TEAMMATES SELF'S *FRIENDS.*
WELL, WARLOCK, FRIENDS ARE WHAT WE *ARE!*
I'LL LEAVE THE PORTAL OPEN, LOCK.
HURRY BACK.
THE SAD PART IS, WE'D BE BETTER OFF IF HIS DAD *IS* IN THERE WAITING FOR HIM.
ILLYANA--HOW CAN YOU THINK SUCH A THING--?!!
"THAT'S MY NATURE, BOBBY."
CONTACT NEGATIVE. *COAST IS CLEAR!!*


BEFORE DAWN, THE KING TAKES HIS LEAVE.
HE LOOKS SO ALONE.
WE MAY BE DOING WHAT'S RIGHT...
...BUT I STILL FEEL NO LESS A COWARD!
YOU SHOULD NA' DESPAIR, 'BERTO.
WHEN ALL LOOKED BLEAKEST FOR THE BRUCE, HE SAT UP ONE RAINY NIGHT IN A HOVEL AN' WATCHED A SPIDER TRY TO SPIN HER WEB. TIME AN' AGAIN, SHE TRIED, POOR WEE THING--TIME AN' AGAIN, SHE FAILED.
BUT SHE NE'ER GAVE UP HOPE. AN' FINALLY, SHE COMPLETED HER WEB. AN' THE KING THOUGHT, IF A SPIDER COULD HAVE SUCH DETERMINATION, COULD A MAN HAVE ANY LESS?
SO HE PRESSED ON, RALLYING HIS TROOPS TO DEFEAT THE ENGLISH AT BANNOCKBURN--A VICTORY THAT GUARANTEED SCOTLAND'S INDEPENDENCE FOR CENTURIES.
IF HE COULD PERSEVERE AN' TRIUMPH...
...WHO'S TO SAY WE CAN NOT?
THANK YOU, LITTLE SPIDER, FOR THAT PEP TALK!
YOU'RE QUITE WELCOME.
HEY, RANEY, WHERE'S YOUR BELT?
OH--!
YOU'RE BLUSHING!
AM NOT!
HIS MAJESTY MADE ME A GIFT OF THIS NECKLACE.
IT WAS PERFECTLY PROPER OF ME...
...TO GIVE HIM A KEEPSAKE IN RETURN.
HISTORIANS ARE GONNA LOVE PUZZLIN' THAT ONE OUT, GIRL.
EVERYBODY SET? OKAY, MAGIK--LET'S ROLL!
READY OR NOT, MAGUS--HERE WE COME!
NEXT:
ASHES, THE HEART!

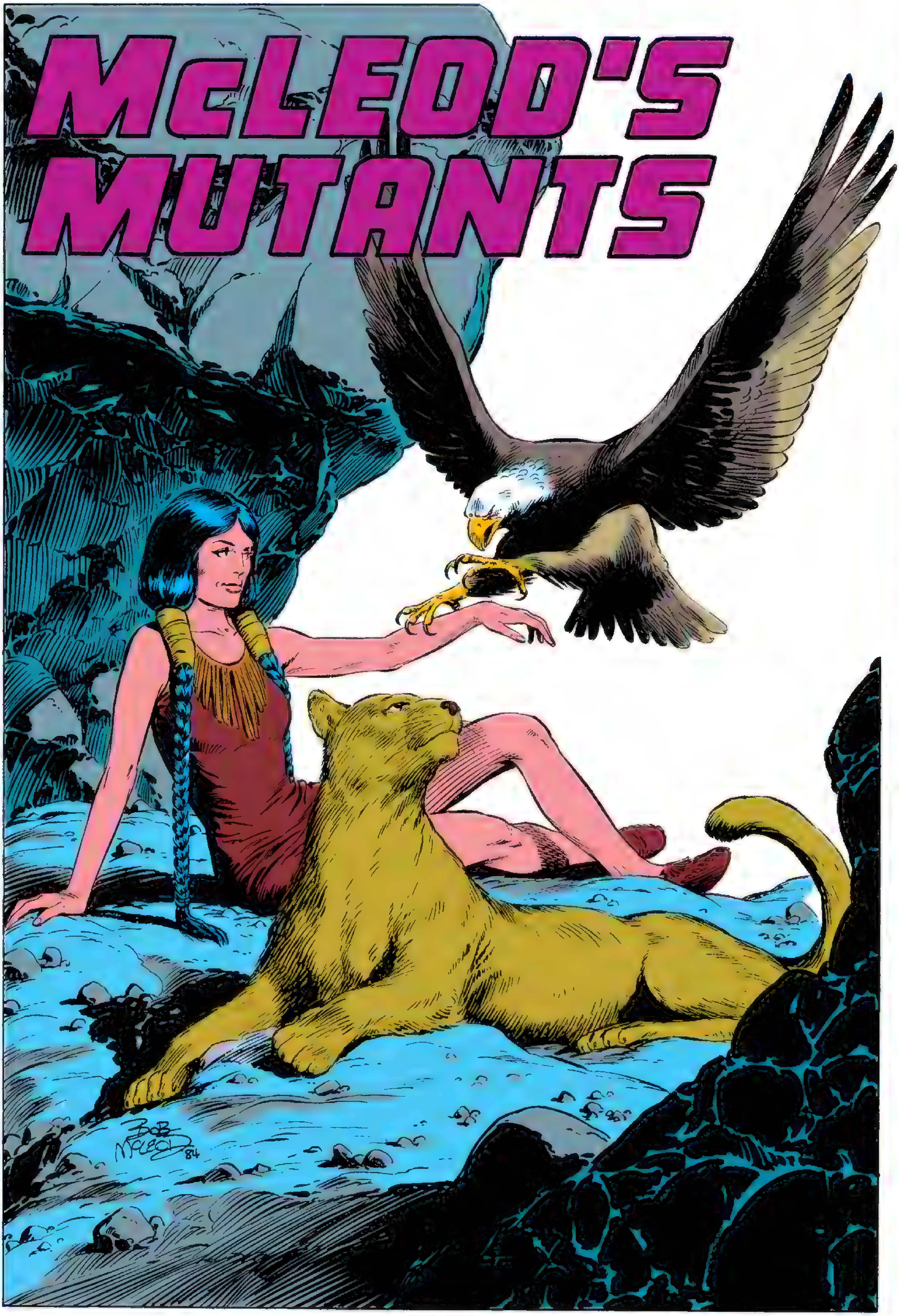
New Mutants pin-up by Alan Davis & Paul Neary


ALAN DAVIS
NEAR

Hellions character designs by Bob McLeod


CHEST EMBLEM COULD EITHER BE A GROUP OR SCHOOL INSIGNIA OR INDIVIDUAL SIGN
EMPATH
CATSEYE
THUNDERBIRD
ROULETTE
JETSTREAM
AROT
UNIFORM BACK

*Marvel Fanfare #27* pin-ups by Bob McLeod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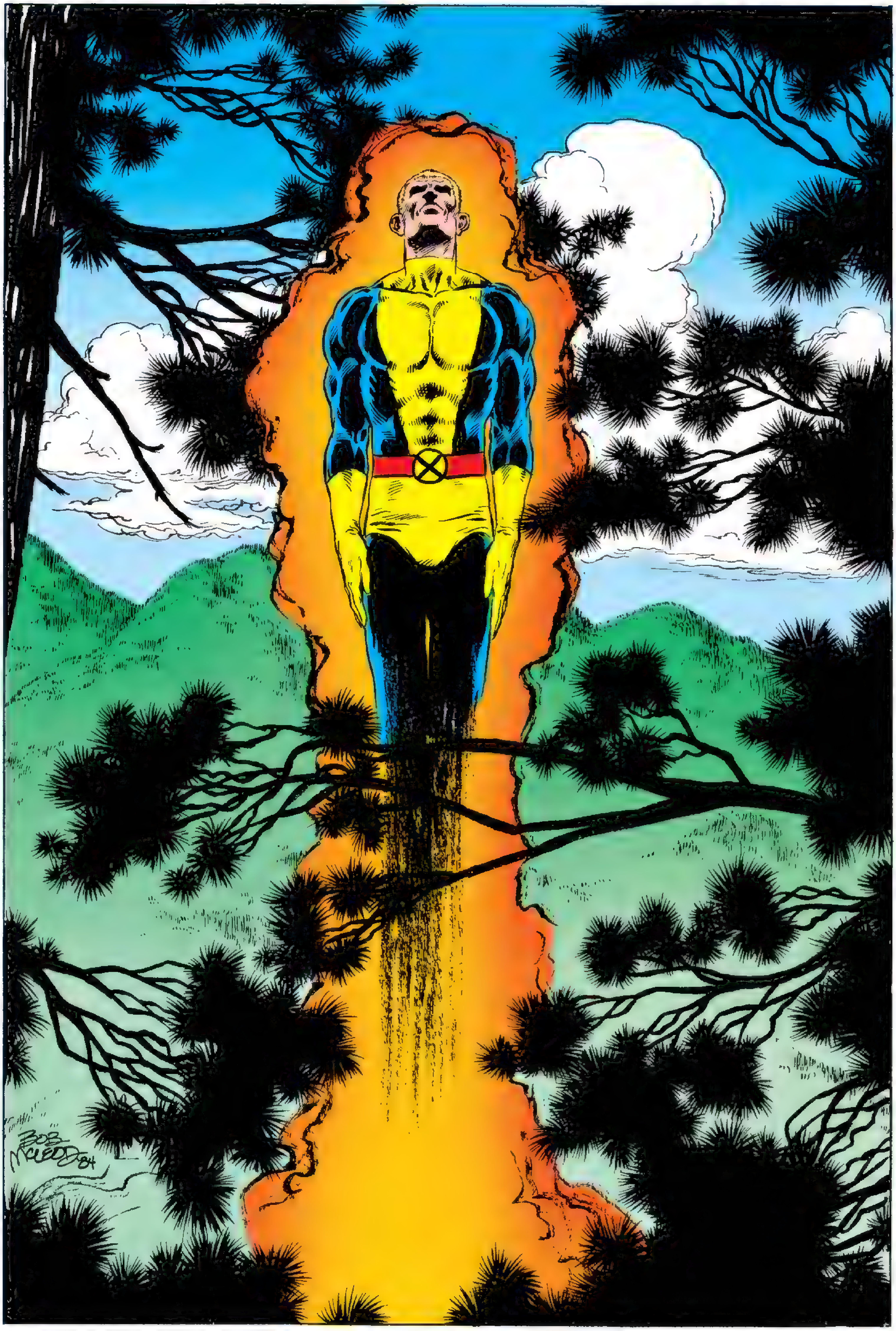

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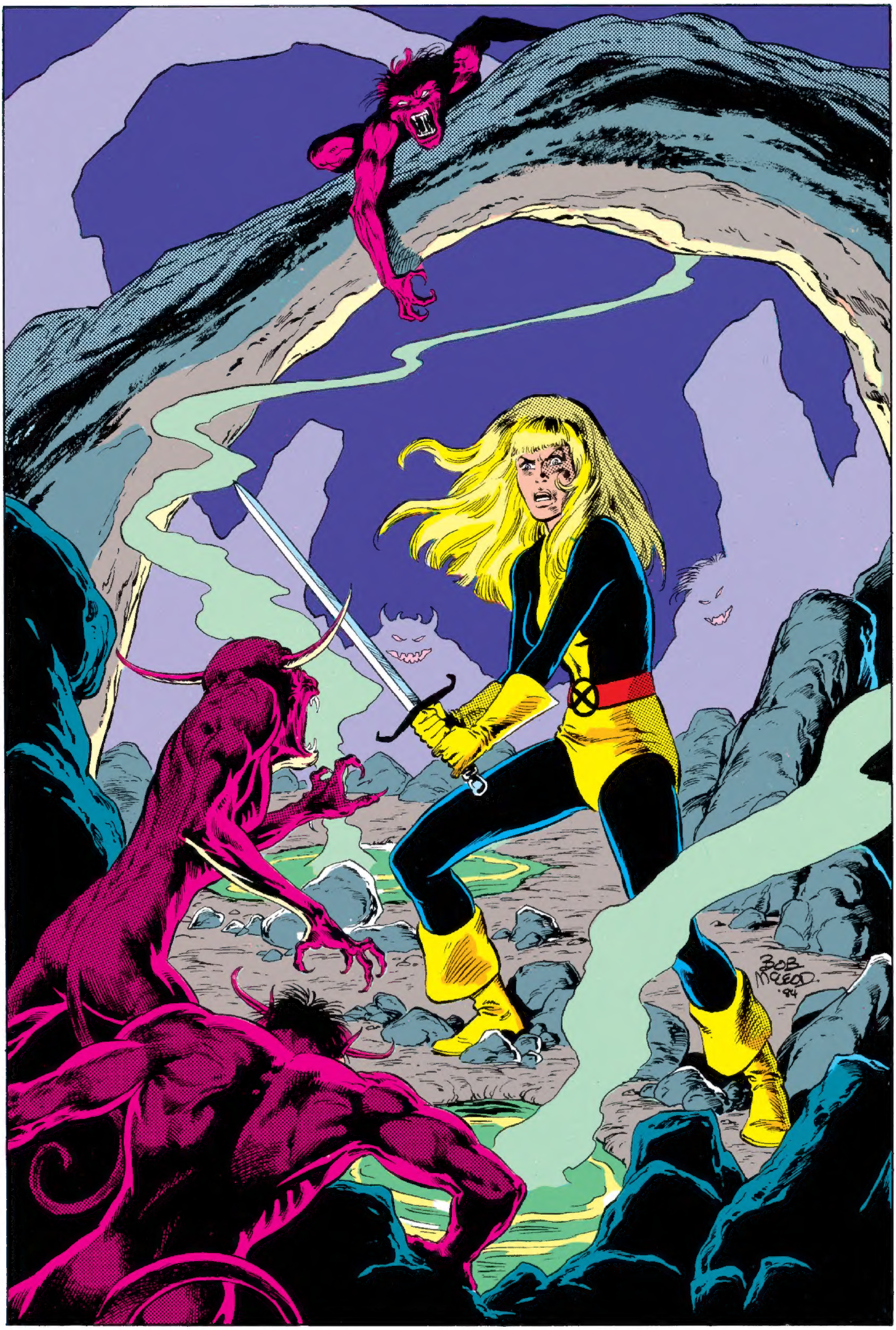
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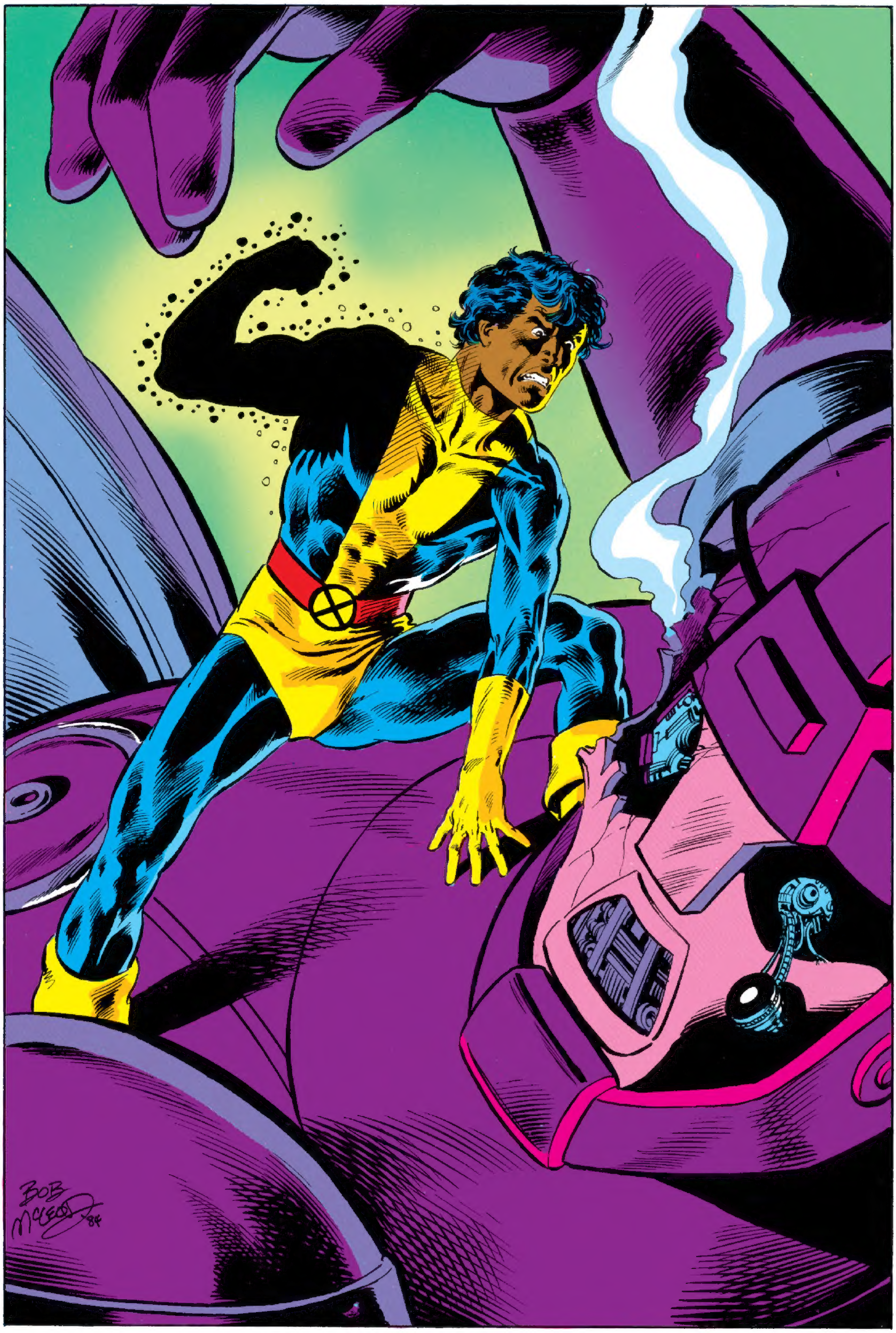
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